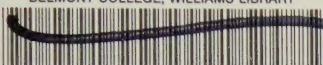


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ANDREW JACKSON'S CAMPAIGN
AGAINST THE BRITISH
OR
THE MISSISSIPPI TERRITORY
IN THE WAR OF 1812



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Andrew Jackson's Campaign
Against the British, or the
Mississippi Territory in
the War of 1812 ✕ ✕

CONCERNING THE MILITARY OPERATIONS
OF THE AMERICANS, CREEK INDIANS,
BRITISH, AND SPANISH

1813-1815

BY
MRS. DUNBAR ROWLAND
(ERON ROWLAND)

New York
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TO MY HUSBAND
WHO HAS AIDED ME IN ALL MY
HISTORICAL UNDERTAKINGS
THIS VOLUME IS
AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

FOREWORD

THE first edition of this history was printed in 1921 in the Publications of the Mississippi Historical Society. That edition, hurriedly prepared, was very limited and the request for another has given the author the opportunity of making some corrections and revisions, an opportunity of which she gladly avails herself. The new edition contains some material concerning General Andrew Jackson that has never appeared in any narratives of his life. In the preparation of the second edition the documentary sources covering this period in the history of the Mississippi Territory have been carefully studied and outlined, in order that the reader may more fully understand the scope and importance of operations in the Territory during the War of 1812-15 and appreciate the heroic conduct of its people.

PREFACE

IN this short history of General Andrew Jackson's Coast Campaign against the British during the War of 1812, I endeavor also to give a truthful account of the part played by the Mississippi Territory and its soldiery in that conspicuous campaign. Many historians fail to surround the war in this part of the Republic with its actual environment and the reader gets no more than a hazy idea of its locality. Excepting the defense of New Orleans, the scenes of action were principally in the Mississippi Territory. Without clear knowledge of this fact the reader cannot perceive the local color and would fail to grasp the relative significance of events in the growth and development of the states of the lower South.

While I write with the purpose of emphasizing the activities of the troops of the Mississippi Territory and of drawing attention to many omissions and erroneous statements concerning them, yet it is my pleasant task to record the brilliant exploits and valor of all troops which took part, under General Andrew Jackson, in the campaign against

the Creek Indians and the British during the War of 1812.

In the story of the Coast Campaign against Great Britain and her allies the strong spirit of American nationalism prevailing in the far Southern section during this period is insistent. In view of the weak national defense maintained in this region, had this spirit been less active the war in all probability would have been as lacking in valor here as it was in the North.

Besides numerous continuous histories of the United States by American and English authors, a list of the documentary and printed sources to which I have had access, filed in the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, will be found in a bibliography included in this volume.

That a history of a campaign about which there has been so much controversy should not have reached an admitted standard of accuracy is not strange, and all historians writing of this period would do well to preface their narratives with the statement of Roosevelt, who observes in his history "The Naval War of 1812," p. 520, "In writing my history I have had to deal with a mass of confused and contradictory testimony which has sometimes been quite impossible to reconcile. It has therefore been impossible to avoid errors."

To Dr. J. S. Bassett I am deeply indebted for having read the manuscript of this edition, which was prepared in 1922. While there is a difference of opinion in some instances, his criticisms have been of the greatest value.

THE AUTHOR

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ANDREW JACKSON'S CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE BRITISH

CHAPTER I

CONDITIONS IN THE MISSISSIPPI TERRITORY AT THE BEGINNING OF THE CREEK WAR

IN the spirited and momentous episode of General Andrew Jackson's Coast Campaign against the British during the closing hostilities between the United States and Great Britain in the War of 1812, a number of distinguished sons of the Mississippi Territory, along with several thousand brave troops mustered within its borders, bore a conspicuous part. The most prominent figures in this period of the Territory's history were Governor David Holmes, General Ferdinand Leigh Claiborne and Major Thomas Hinds, whose patriotism and valor were as pronounced and ardent as that of any of the leaders of the American Revolution.

The campaign in the lower South against the British began with the Creek War. It closed

with the second attack by the British on Fort Bowyer, February 8, 1815. Whether unfortunate and unnecessary, as some historians think, this last conflict between the newly established Republic and the mother country certainly divested the latter of any desire to renew hostilities, or to set up pretexts by which she might construe the terms of the Treaty of Ghent to her own advantage.

"The battle of New Orleans," says a contributor to the "International Encyclopedia," "though fought after the Treaty of Ghent was signed, was full of results of the utmost importance to the young Republic." The historian Schouler also has observed that it was "the only battle of the war that made any impression on the European mind." It is admitted by able historians that the war in other sections had been, to a large extent, without renown. In addition to saving our reputation for valor this successful climax is believed by many to have strengthened Madison's administration and to have weakened the Federalist party beyond hope of recovery. For other results, it cannot be denied that the spirit exhibited by the Tennessee, Mississippi, Kentucky and Louisiana troops in the southern conflict aroused and quickened the national conscience throughout the new Republic which was,

at least during the war, at a low ebb in the New England States.

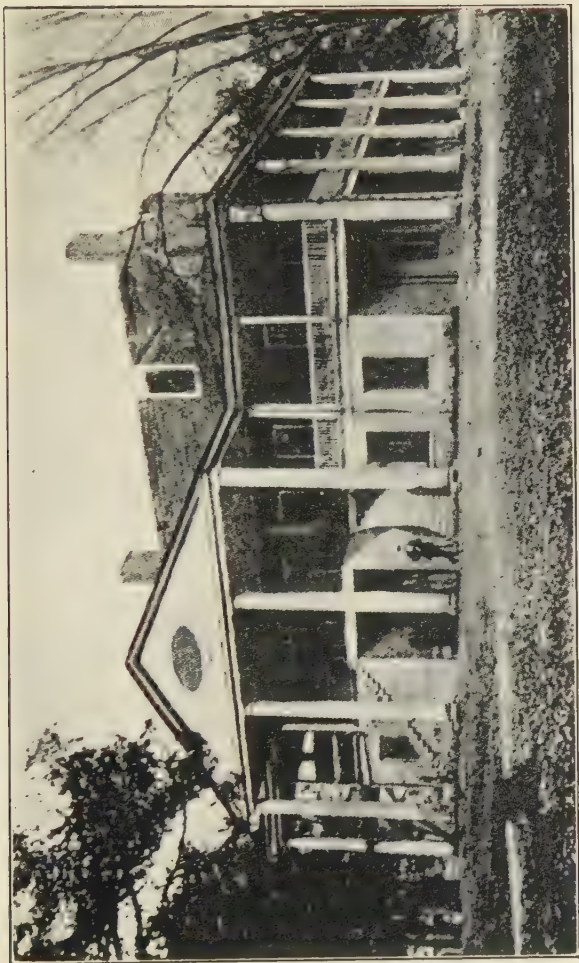
The operations of the War of 1812 in the lower South were, in addition to the forces of the regular army, conducted by troops from Tennessee, Mississippi, Kentucky and Louisiana, with volunteer companies from Georgia and the Carolinas. As an historical setting it might be well, in tracing the record of the troops of the Mississippi Territory, to emphasize the fact that General Jackson began his aggressive campaign against the British within the confines of that Territory, Mobile and the adjacent country having been included in the annexation of 1812. The soldiery of this region, whether formerly Tory or patriot, had by this time become thoroughly attached to the American government.

Throughout the administrations of Winthrop Sargent and W. C. C. Claiborne, the first governors of the Mississippi Territory, and from the time of Aaron Burr's conspiracy and expedition, to the period when Governor Holmes directed its destinies, the military organization of the Territory had been a matter of pride, and had, during Governor Holmes' administration, become a reliable and efficient defense. Statistics in the military archives of the State of Mississippi show that from its large territorial militia detachments

could at any time be drawn for prompt service in the United States Army.

The older population of the Mississippi Territory was planted during the colonial period of the Natchez District in the towns of Natchez, Port Gibson, Woodville, Old Greenville, Liberty, Washington and other smaller communities, all of which were surrounded by wealthy slaveholders who represented in 1813 a social life in many respects as advanced as any in the Republic.¹ The large slave and landholders were amassing immense fortunes principally by the cultivation of cotton which attracted the attention of the outside world. Their private libraries contained numerous volumes of the classics and literary clubs were the order of the day. Toryism was a thing of the past and many of the most aristocratic families that had removed to the Territory after the Revolution were Federalists, but later the principles of the Whig party were advocated by a considerable number of this class. However, the political doctrines taught by Thomas Jefferson, Calhoun and Jackson, and still later by

¹ The census of the Natchez District for 1788 shows a population of 2,679 inhabitants, composed of a slight original French and Spanish population to which were added a strong tide of immigration from Virginia, the New England states, New Jersey, and the Carolinas, much of which had come during English colonial occupancy. As early as 1776 the Scotch Highlanders from North Carolina had settled there, and plantation life was already well established before American occupation.



"Concord," Residence of the Spanish Governors, Natchez, Miss.

Jefferson Davis, were destined to enthrone democracy permanently in this section. But here at the very dawn of the nineteenth century democracy, nationalism and patriotism were making their appearance and being intensified each day.

The eagerness of the militia to defend their country's claim and the initiative, courage and ardor displayed in the face of danger were no more due to the austerity of pioneer life, which equipped men constantly for the roughest experiences of war, than to the fact that the older Southern States had contributed a goodly share of their best blood to the population that was taking root in the Gulf region, infusing into it constantly the fervid patriotism that had characterized the Continental Army. France and Spain, too, on their several leave-takings, had contributed fragments of the illustrious soldiery of Louis XIV and Charles X to their far western empire. In this way can be explained the presence of the high-bred type which flowered in many communities of the lower South during the first decades of the nineteenth century.

In the person of General Ferdinand L. Claiborne, who appears so conspicuously in this narrative, we recognize the same type that prevailed in Virginia and the Carolinas. Though

not a native of the Territory he found congenial society in the little city of Natchez, where he married into the prominent Hutchins family.

Claiborne was a native of Sussex County, Virginia, and a brother of William Charles Cole Claiborne, second Governor of the Mississippi Territory. Appointed ensign in the First Sublegion under General Anthony Wayne, his military service began February 23, 1793. He became lieutenant in June, 1794, in the Army of the Ohio and took part in the famous battle on the Maumee River. In 1796 he was assigned to the First Regiment and reached the rank of captain in October, 1799. After the close of the war in the Northwest, he was stationed in the recruiting service in Richmond and Norfolk, and, subsequently returning to that region, served as acting adjutant-general of the Army. He resigned from the Army, January 1, 1802, and removed to Natchez, where he became a merchant. Later he married a daughter of Colonel Anthony Hutchins. In 1804 he was elected to the General Assembly of the Mississippi Territory and, after the close of his brother's administration, was appointed colonel of the militia regiment of Adams County to succeed Osmun and was selected to command the detachment that marched to the support of General Wilkinson for the Sabine

Campaign in 1806. Owing to some misunderstanding then, Governor Williams revoked his commissions as magistrate and colonel in the latter part of 1807. Governor Holmes, recognizing his great worth, requested the President to commission him brigadier-general of the militia of the Territory; the Legislature joined in the request in 1809 and Claiborne was commissioned in 1811, Governor Holmes proclaiming his appointment September 28. He had charge of the organization of the Mississippi militia regiment for the United States service in 1812, and was colonel of this regiment in 1813 when the Mississippi Territory was menaced by the Creek Indians.

With the tide that flowed from the older American colonies to the Natchez District—a name that had clung to the region from early colonial days—came another adventurous youth—young Thomas Hinds, from Berkeley County, Virginia. He came upon the scene about the time the country was designated by Congress as the Mississippi Territory, in honor of the great river in whose embrace it lay many leagues to the north and south.

The new Territory had a number of small flourishing towns and, though Natchez, Vicksburg, Port Gibson and Washington held higher

rank historically, none was of more importance than the county seat of Jefferson County, Old Greenville, named for Henry Green, a colonial settler from Virginia, and later renamed for General Nathanael Greene.¹ It was to this place that young Hinds came when but a youth of nineteen. As early as 1790, the place, through which the old Natchez Trail ran, contained a popular tavern and a number of prominent citizens, and on American occupation it soon became a thriving village.

But while the little town had by now its families of wealth and culture, it was not without its frontier element, left over from an earlier day, and among the many stories that still survive of the place none was more thrilling nor better calculated to stir the blood of the inhabitants than that which describes a party of rough riders coming into court one morning, bringing the head of Samuel Mason, the noted outlaw, feared throughout the Southern region. And here tradition disputes the records as to the identity of the head; the people of the town, however, and the country breathed more freely at the thought of its burial place across the

¹ This town was later given the name of Old Greenville to distinguish it from the new town of Greenville in Washington County, Mississippi. It is not now in existence. See Rowland's "Encyclopedia of Mississippi History," Vol. II.

river. As an offset to the tales of murder and rapine that crept into the early courts of the old town, was the presence of Protestant churches and schools whose influence was strongly felt in the life of the people, engendering a deep piety markedly noticeable in succeeding generations and continuing until about thirty years after the War for Southern Independence, when it seemed gradually to become more a matter of form than of spirit.

In the promising little town of Old Greenville also came into existence the famous Jefferson Troop of Horse, a military organization composed of the flower of the community, in whose blood still coursed a strain of the cavaliers of King Charles.

It was in this environment that young Hinds of Virginia had cast his lot, and like all youth he was influenced and molded by the life around him. The call to military life was very strong in many Southern localities of the American Republic at that period; everywhere young men were anxious for military preferment and it was not long before Thomas Hinds became first lieutenant of the Jefferson Troop of Horse. He is described as a youth of prepossessing appearance, with dark, flashing eyes, slender, graceful figure and good address, coupled with a certain mastery of speech

and confidence of manner which arose not only from temperament but from acquaintance with the best social customs of an older civilization. He soon became very popular in the new community, and the fact that after only a few years' residence in the place he won the heart and hand of the daughter of the aristocratic Thomas M. Green is proof that he was a social favorite.¹ In addition, he was what was termed one of the "rising" young men of the new Territory. In 1806 he was married to Miss Malinda Green, and this marriage strengthened the already warm attachment between himself and General Andrew Jackson, with whom he was in after years to come in close contact in some of the most thrilling episodes of the history of the State and of the country. His connection with this influential family also opened up many opportunities for position in the civil service, and he was not without a due appreciation of such honors. A few years after his marriage he was made a member of the General Council, and in 1811 was appointed Chief Justice of the Orphans' Court. But the associations of his early career had influenced him deeply, and it was not long before his young wife and her family discovered that he was

¹The descendants of Thomas Marston Green still reside in their ancestral home at Church Hill in Jefferson County.

enamored of Jackson's new profession, that of soldiering. He continued captain of the Jefferson Troop until promoted to higher honors on the field of battle.

It was not with Jackson, however, but with General Ferdinand Leigh Claiborne, commander of the Territorial Army of Mississippi, that young Thomas Hinds saw his first military service. With his cavalry experience at Natchitoches and later in opposing the advance of Aaron Burr into the Territory, he had attracted attention. Connected by marriage with the Claibornes, both the General and his brother, W. C. C. Claiborne, watched with keen interest the career of the young soldier. After Mississippi had given W. C. C. Claiborne to Louisiana as its first American governor, he continued to follow with enthusiasm the course of the Mississippi cavalryman through the War of 1812, which ended in the South with the battle of New Orleans as a brilliant climax.

CHAPTER II

ANDREW JACKSON'S RESIDENCE AND MARRIAGE IN
THE MISSISSIPPI TERRITORY

MANY distinguished men of the early history of the Mississippi Territory either lived or spent a portion of their time at Old Greenville, among them Cato West, George Poindexter, Christopher Rankin, Edward Turner and Joseph E. Davis, brother of Jefferson Davis. Here also lived for a time during Spanish occupation young Andrew Jackson, who was in after years to become the military hero of the South. Of his life in the Mississippi Territory and the many incidents connected with it, little or nothing has been recorded by historians. After careful research the author feels sure of the authenticity of all statements contained in this volume relative to his life in the Territory.

Jackson was of a roving nature and, on coming farther South, it was to and near Old Greenville that his adventures led him. The town was destined to remain a memorable spot in his life, since it was near it that he was married to Mrs. Rachel Donelson Robards, an amiable and attrac-

tive lady, records a biographer, for whom he had formed a sincere regard in Nashville, Tennessee. During his extended stays in the Natchez District, where he kept a store at Bruinsburg near Old Greenville and engaged in the purchase and sale of negroes to the Mississippi and Louisiana planters, he made warm friends of the Green family, to which reference will again be made. During his early career he was little else than a rolling stone, but always seething with an ambition to belong to the better social class and having something inherent in his makeup that won for him ready admittance into that charmed circle in many instances, even before he had achieved fame. His patriotism, naturally strong, had been intensified by the loss, at the critical age of fourteen, of almost his entire family in the first struggle for American freedom. Of this period of his life historians have written variously.

In a summary of the early life of General Jackson, Sparks, in his "Memories of Fifty Years," says in quaint phrasing:

"Andrew Jackson was one of those rare creations of nature which appear at long intervals to astonish and delight mankind. His early life was very obscure and he himself was uncertain of his birthplace, though he believed it was in South Carolina." . . .

Among the Appendices of Parton's "Life of Andrew Jackson" is found this interesting account of General Jackson's birthplace which he says practically substantiates his theory that he was born in North Carolina.

"The following letter, from James F. White, Esq., of Fort Mills, York District, South Carolina, is confirmatory," says Parton. "Mr. White was a gentleman of the highest respectability, a very old resident near the boundary line of the Carolinas. He relates the recollections of an aunt, long since deceased:

"I will first give you the age of the old aunt spoken of, from a family record. She was born in the year 1756, being eleven years old at the time of General Jackson's birth, quite old enough to recollect perfectly such an incident taking place at a short distance from her father's residence. Major Robert Crawford's wife and she were first cousins; at whose house, from her report, she frequently visited. She said that General Andrew Jackson was born at a place called Davis, in North Carolina; Davis might have been some original occupier of the place. She said, that a short time after the birth of her son, the widow moved over to the South Carolina side. She and her children became dependent on the charities of the Irish settlers of the Waxhaws, especially the Crawfords. She said that Andrew Jackson attended a school, taught in the Waxhaws by one Humphreys. This school broke up

about the time of General Gates' defeat, and was not resumed again. At this school General Jackson received his first and last Latin lessons. Shortly after the close of the war, General Jackson studied law in Salisbury, N. C., and, to the best of my recollection, she said that he (Jackson) commenced the practice of the law at Charlotte; have no recollection of hearing it said that the General ever taught school. Never heard of the father of Jackson being a landholder, but believe, from the old story about the family of Jackson, they must have been very poor, and of that class of Irish emigrants denominated thriftless. My aunt persisted in asserting, to the day of her death, that General Jackson was born in North Carolina, a short distance east of the main road leading from Lancasterville to Charlotte, and near where the said road crosses Waxhaw Creek. I do not recollect to have ever heard my aunt speak of the General's father. She seems to have become acquainted with the family about the time of the birth of Andrew Jackson. From her being acquainted with the removal of Jackson's mother to Waxhaw, and that too, so soon after the birth, it is fair to conclude that the father had died before the child was born. This is the sum of my knowledge of the parentage and early life of General Jackson, in the Waxhaws."

Sparks further records that Jackson said his mother was "a little, dumpy red-headed Irish woman." When Andy left home to go to Tennessee she told him, "Never tell a lie, nor take what

is not your own, nor sue anybody for slander or assault and battery. Always settle *them* cases yourself.”¹

“Jackson,” says Sparks, “was a restless and enterprising man. . . . In business he was cautious. He was a remarkable judge of human character and rarely gave his confidence to untried men. Notwithstanding the impetuosity of his nature, upon occasions he could be as cool and calculating as a Yankee. . . . He was in the habit of trading with the low country, that is, with the inhabitants of Mississippi and Louisiana. He had a store at Bruinsburg near the mouth of Bayou Pierre in Claiborne County in the Mississippi Territory. At this store, which stood immediately upon the bank of the Mississippi, there was a race track for quarter races (a sport Jackson was very fond of) and many an anecdote was rife in the neighborhood of the skill of the old hero in pitting a cock or turning a quarterhorse.”

Old records in the form of bills of sale in his possession, affirms Sparks, attest that Jackson, while in the Natchez District, followed the occupation of “negro trader,” a business that usually met with harsh disapproval and contempt in the community. In this instance it did not seem to

¹ Sparks, in his “Memories of Fifty Years,” records this story as having been told to him by Jackson himself when he visited him in Washington during his first presidential term. If not at this time, then being dead, some historians assert, it is quite certain that the Irish mother gave her son this counsel at some parting preceding an adventure.

undermine the social standing of the offender, probably because of the strong friendship of Thomas M. and Abner Green, sons of Colonel Thomas Green.

The Green family, distinguished in Virginia and Georgia, came to the Natchez District when it was under Spanish rule, in the belief that Georgia's claim to it was valid. They had been immigrants at the time the Donelsons came to the frontier settlements and had left the latter in Tennessee.

It was to Thomas Marston Green's home that Mrs. Rachel Donelson Robards came prior to her marriage to Andrew Jackson. Though some historians attribute her first acquaintance with this family to Jackson, it seems certain that Mrs. Robards must have known some of its members or have heard of them through her family before her visit to the District. Her mother confided to a boarder that her daughter would visit friends in Natchez, the entire country at that time being referred to by that name.

Mrs. Robards was the only daughter of Colonel John Donelson, pioneer settler of Sullivan County, Tennessee. He had emigrated from Virginia with his family in the year 1779 to Sullivan County near Long Island, now Kings-

port. The Donelsons were among the most prominent people in the early history of this county, and were, historians have said, of superior Virginia ancestry. Colonel Donelson, the father of Rachel, was influential in negotiating Indian treaties, having been associated with General Joseph Martin and Colonel Isaac Shelby in shaping the treaty at Long Island, July 9, 1783. Many daring exploits are narrated of him in his expedition to the Cumberland Settlements, in some of which he was accompanied, it is said by biographers, by his pretty young daughter Rachel, to whom he was deeply attached. Of her marriage to and divorce from Lewis Robards much has been written and will not be dwelt on in this narrative. It is generally stated that she came to the Natchez District (in 1790) to escape the presence of a jealous and, as some thought, cruel husband, from whom there is much strong evidence that she obtained a divorce under Spanish authorities. Sparks, who was closely related to her by marriage and was in daily intercourse with members of the Green family—with whom she constantly associated and turned to for advice in the most trying crisis of her life—asserts that suit for divorce was instituted at once on her arrival and was granted by a Spanish tribunal. The

District was governed at the time by Don Carlos Grand Pré who, the records state, was invested with the power among others to grant divorces. The original document has never been located, but much scattered evidence seems to prove that the divorce was granted. Besides, Thomas Marston and Abner Green were careful, painstaking men, of high social position and large public and private interests, and while not in sympathy with Spanish rule, held public office and wielded a strong influence in the District, and either brother could easily have procured the divorce. That little attention has ever been paid the proceedings may be accounted for by the fact that all Spanish law was regarded as not binding by the Americans and usually held in contempt, though Thomas Marston Green, from all accounts concerning him, would have insisted on carrying it out to the letter.

Suit for divorce from his wife had, indeed, been instituted by Lewis Robards, and it was reported in the summer of 1791 that the Legislature of Virginia had granted him the divorce. Later in the summer Andrew Jackson went down to the Natchez District and there the marriage took place at the fine old country home of Thomas Marston Green, where Mrs. Robards had been a guest for many months. Colonel Thomas Green,

the colonial pioneer and father of Thomas Marston and Abner Green, it is stated by Lowry and McCardle and numerous other local historians, performed the ceremony in the capacity of a magistrate.¹ If Jackson ever visited the District during Mrs. Robards' stay in the country before the marriage the records do not show it, and Sparks flatly states, though Judge Overton's narrative refutes it, he did not accompany her on the trip down.² Family history preserved by contemporaries possesses a value closely allied to records, and Sparks' statements are strengthened by the fact that he was a man of high character and social position. Some regard him as being too old to remember correctly at the time of his *Memoirs*, but as they are very well written it would seem that as long as one can write connectedly and with a purpose, his memory would also serve him. Besides, much good mental work has been performed during the seventies. However, one might speculate about the matter forever and be as far from a decision as ever, though it is not beyond question that Judge Overton could have been mistaken.

¹ In 1785 the Georgia Legislature, claiming certain territory in the Spanish country to the south, established the county of Bourbon, which included the present counties of Warren, Claiborne, Adams, Franklin and Wilkinson. Thomas Green also held office under this claim, with jurisdiction over the county.

² See Parton, "Life of Andrew Jackson," p. 151, Vol. I



· Springfield," Jefferson County. Here Andrew Jackson was married in 1791.

As another point of controversy, it has been stated by local historians that Mrs. Robards purchased a plantation near the Greens' upon which stood a comfortable log house and it was there that she was married to Jackson; but it is natural that she should have preferred the home of her warm friends, who had stood by her in her trouble, for the important event. After the marriage, the young couple lived for a while at Bayou Pierre in a modest home of their own. They soon returned to Nashville, however, and lived at a plantation home called "Hunter's Hill," and though Jackson was to re-visit the Mississippi country again and again on high missions, the event of his marriage there would ever stand out above all others.

An occurrence, however, disturbed their peaceful life in Tennessee, which was no less than the news, in December of 1793, that Lewis Robards was suing in a Kentucky court for divorce, on the ground that his wife, although never properly divorced, had been living with Jackson. It then became known that the Legislature of Virginia, in 1791, had not granted Robards a divorce, but merely a right to sue in a Kentucky court, Kentucky not being a state at that time. Any divorce obtained by Mrs. Robards under the Spanish laws was, of course, disregarded, and

the Kentucky court granted Robards a divorce. Great was the surprise and though bitter the circumstance that involved their young lives they courageously decided to have a second ceremony which occurred in January, 1794.

Much has been written on the subject of Jackson's marriage, but very little relating to it locally, and many of his biographers admit total ignorance of his frequent residence in the Mississippi Territory. It is conceded by all historians that the union was a happy one, which lasted until Mrs. Jackson's untimely death at the Hermitage a short time before General Jackson's inauguration as President of the United States. Their domestic relations have been the subject of some of Parton's most kindly and tender references in his interesting life of General Jackson.

Mrs. Jackson was not an educated woman in the sense of the schools, but her letters indicate a strong inquiring mind and clearly prove that she was always in touch with her husband's affairs. In the matter of education, it is a well-established fact that few frontier women of the best families of that time knew anything about the niceties of grammar, though they sometimes read a great deal. Rachel Donelson was no exception to the rule. Said to have been high spirited and viva-

cious in more youthful days, the complications of her life weighed heavily upon her and she soon turned largely to the church for solace and for social activities. The hospitality of her home, however, was accorded to both saint and sinner, since Jackson's friendship embraced both classes. While not given to seclusion, she grew to be of a deeply religious cast of mind and her piety, it is said, influenced Jackson's whole life; for fiery and unrestrained as he was by nature, beneath his excesses of self-will and temper there came a constantly expressed and unmistakable dependence upon Divine Providence after his marriage.

The ties of friendship between the Green and Jackson families were strengthened by several intermarriages, two sons of the Green family marrying nieces of Mrs. Jackson. They formed a part of a social circle that observed the customs and reflected the amenities and aspirations of a well-ordered society. In many of the homes of the wealthier class were to be found the refinements of civilization, the owners dispensing a hospitality second only to that found in the older Colonial states. Plantation life here was attractive and even luxurious, and the prominent families were of a different type to Jackson, though many historians agree that he early possessed an address and a polish that approximated

good breeding. He possessed many beautiful innate virtues, such as loyalty and kindliness, and there was a certain delicacy and chivalry in his manner toward women so natural and spontaneous, that it gained instant recognition from his associates. In later years he acquired, it may be said sincerely, as did Abraham Lincoln and many other self-made public men of America, the forms and usages of good society.

It was Jackson's sincerity and singularly magnetic personality, his wide information and thirst for advancement—not his claim to good breeding and literary culture—that won for him the strong friendship of the Green family. Their friendship, too, for the older members of the Donelson family had been one of long duration, and while neither Jackson nor Mrs. Jackson were, from the standpoint of culture and refinement, their equal, nor accustomed to society such as made up the better element of the old Natchez District, their native ability and personal charm and attractions made it easy for them to mingle with all classes in a community that had not as yet become uniformly advanced. Thomas M. Green, while the peer socially and intellectually, from many standpoints, of men like Sir William Dunbar of the Natchez District, could at the same time enjoy the association of active, lively

and lovable natures such as were possessed by the Jacksons. Almost as much disparity exists in a circle of friends at the present day and the fact occasions little or no embarrassment.

CHAPTER III

TECUMSEH INCITES THE CREEK INDIANS TO MAKE
WAR UPON THE MISSISSIPPI TERRITORY

It was now that the Mississippi Territory was to have a share in the national struggle for complete independence from English control and interference. The Mississippians began the struggle at their very doors. The British, through the great Shawnee chieftain Tecumseh, had incited the Creek Indians to make war upon neighboring Americans, and thus was brought about what is known as the Creek Indian War, recognized by historians as one of the most moving chapters of the War of 1812.¹ Not only as a

¹ The name Tecumseh is thought by some students to mean "meteor," by others "flying panther." It is sometimes spelled Tecumtha. The "Encyclopedia Britannica" says of this famous chieftain: "While still a youth he took part in attacks on settlers passing down the Ohio and in widely extended hunting expeditions or predatory forays to the west and south; and he served in the Indian wars preceding the Treaty of Greenville in 1795. About 1800 his eloquence and self-control made him a leader in conferences between the Indians and whites. After 1805 the Indians of the North-West became aroused by a series of treaties calling for new cessions of their territory and by the prospect of war between Great Britain and the United States. This presented to Tecumseh and his brother Tenskwatawa (i.e., the Open Door), popularly called the Prophet, the opportunity to put into operation a scheme which followed the ambitious

preliminary but as a goad and spur to the Coast Campaign, conducted by Jackson against the British, it was of the utmost importance.

dream of Pontiac. With some scattered Shawnee clans as a nucleus, the brothers proceeded to organize, first near Greenville, Ohio, and later on the White and Tippecanoe Rivers in Indiana, the Prophet's town, which was based on a sort of communism and was apparently devoted to peace, industry and sobriety, but their actual plan was to combine all of the Indians from Canada to Florida in a great democratic confederacy to resist the encroachment of the whites. Tribal organizations were to be disregarded, but all warriors were to be represented at periodical assemblages where matters of interest to all Indians were to be definitely decided. The twofold influence that was to dominate this league was the eloquence and political ingenuity of Tecumseh and the superstitious reverence aroused by the Prophet. This programme alarmed the whites along the north-western border. In the course of the next three years Governor William Henry Harrison of Indiana held interviews with each of the brothers, and during one of these, at Vincennes in 1810, the respective leaders narrowly avoided a hostile encounter. Nevertheless the Prophet and Tecumseh reiterated their determination to remain at peace with the United States if the Indians were unmolested in their territory, and if all cessions beyond the Ohio were given up by the whites. The treaty of Fort Wayne in 1809, which called for the cession to the whites of some three million acres of land in central Indiana, was a direct challenge to this programme, and when, during Tecumseh's absence in the South, Harrison made a hostile move against the Prophet's town, the latter ventured to meet him, but was defeated on the 17th of November, 1811, in the famous battle of Tippecanoe, which broke the personal influence of the Prophet and largely destroyed the confederacy built up by Tecumseh. Tecumseh still professed to be friendly toward the United States, probably because his British advisers were not ready to open hostilities, but a series of border outrages indicated that the fatal moment could not long be postponed. When in June, 1812, war broke out Tecumseh joined the British, was commissioned a brigadier-general in the British army, and participated in the skirmishes which preceded General William Hull's surrender at Detroit. He took an active part in the sieges of Fort Meigs, where he displayed his usual clemency toward his prisoners. After the battle of Put-in-Bay, when Colonel Henry Proctor began to retreat from Malden, Tecumseh bitterly reproached him for his cowardice and finally forced him to join battle with Harrison on the Thames River on the 5th of October, 1813. In this battle Tecumseh was killed,

Leading up, then, to hostilities on the Southern Coast, the Creek Indians waged a bitter and bloody war against the Mississippi Territory. Especially were they unrelenting after they discovered that it had become a war for self-preservation and the possession of their native lands. Their various feats of daring and self-sacrifice in behalf of their homes and country compare well with the qualities that characterized the white combatants opposing them. Cruelty of a wanton and diabolical nature to their victims, however, including even women and children, places them in the lowest scale of civilization.

The history of the Creek War not only gives a part of the story of the war in the South, but also reveals the strength and position of the military organizations of the Mississippi Territory when its troops were needed for further service along the Coast. Historians have treated very slovenly the part taken by the Territory in Jackson's Coast Campaign against the British, Parton in his "Life of Andrew Jackson" being so careless as to confuse General Ferdinand L. Claiborne with Governor W. C. C. Claiborne of Louisiana. From his

as traditionally reported, by Colonel Richard M. Johnson of Kentucky, although this has never been fully substantiated. Like Pontiac, whom he doubtless imitated consciously, he had a wonderful eloquence and a power of organization rare among the Indians. His brother, the Prophet, remained with a small band of Shawnees and died west of the Mississippi in 1834."

pages one would suppose that the headquarters of the military operations of the Creek War and of the entire Coast Campaign were in New Orleans. Though Governor Claiborne was keenly alive to the situation, the facts are that, up to the time that New Orleans became the object of capture—which was the ultimate purpose of the British—the Mississippi Territory was, with the exception of the expedition which forced the British out of Pensacola, the scene of action. It was on Governor Holmes of Mississippi that the weight of responsibility fell more heavily than it did on any governor in the lower South.

It was thoroughly recognized by the people of the American Republic, at the inception of hostilities between their nation and Great Britain in 1812, that it was the latter's policy to attach to its standards the various Indian tribes throughout the country, extending into the far Southwest. In "The British Campaigns at Washington and New Orleans" by Subaltern the author says: "It is well known that at the period to which my narrative refers an alliance offensive and defensive subsisted between the government of Great Britain and the heads of as many Indian nations or tribes as felt the aggressions of the settlers upon their ancient territories and were disposed to resent them."

Among the Creek branch of the great Muscogee tribe of Indians, which was the most potent in the Southern section of the country, the United States agent of Indian affairs, Colonel Benjamin Hawkins, had kept peace, in a tolerable fashion, at least, for many years; but while he was very popular with the Creeks personally, they were rebellious and defiant at times in their attitude toward the white settlers of the country. Every concession granted in the way of transportation privileges, especially the great wagon route—though consented to—through the midst of their country, rendered them more dissatisfied each day. The constant stream of emigrants passing through their lands daily, over the old Federal road, out into the inviting hills and valleys of the Mississippi Territory that reached from the Mississippi River to the western borders of Florida, alarmed and filled them with apprehension as to their future. The fate of the Natchez to the west of them, too, seemed to forecast a day when the pale face would overrun and take possession of their country.

The English welcomed the growing dissatisfaction of the Creeks, recognizing in them a useful ally, and lost no opportunity of warning them through various emissaries of the danger that would arise from the growing population that

made up the Tombigbee, Alabama and Tensas settlements of the Mississippi Territory. In the person of the famous Tecumseh, a savage of most unusual type, they found an ally who needed no urging. Born about 1775 in the Miami Valley in the ancient abode of his tribe, whither his parents had returned after a sojourn among their kindred in the beautiful Tallapoosa country, he was a fine specimen of his race at its best development. But while endowed by nature with manly instincts, possessing the virtues of patriotism, love of race and country, and being the recipient of the gentle Moravian faith, he was still in intent and method a savage. Always an ally of the British, it was with the hope, one can easily believe, of using that fact to assist him in his larger and more natural purpose of regaining the ancient possessions of his race that he labored so enthusiastically. His scheme of uniting all the western tribes in a great confederacy bore no fruit, but was ever in his heart and colored his thoughts in death. His efforts to incite the southern Indians against the whites proved a more fruitful project.

The Choctaw branch of the Muscogeas, which had for its most dominant ruler the celebrated medal chieftain Pushmataha, was known to be friendly to the Americans and was more dependable than the Chickasaws, who had more than

once, since their fierce and victorious encounters with Bienville, shown a tendency at times to repel the advances of the Europeans. Between these tribes, however, there was a bond of sympathy; they spoke the same language and were often allies in war, while neither regarded the Creek with admiration or confidence and lived in continual fear of his fierce wrath. The Chickasaws, influenced by the growing friendship for the white race so perceptible on the part of the Choctaws, and the powerful Colbert family of half-breeds in their own midst, remained at peace with the Mississippi Territory.

It was the impetuous and warlike Creeks, boasting a Confederacy of their own, an alliance that dated back for many years and having for its burning purpose self-protection and perpetuation as a race, who were now to make war for their rights and liberties as they took them to be. Alas! that unfair methods should have attended a noble purpose! But shrewder minds than their own were shaping their destiny.

The Spanish, too, in possession of Pensacola through the victory of Don Bernardo de Galvez, were for the time—more through dislike of the Americans than any sincere good will for the British—in sympathy with the latter and were

continually seeking to ally themselves with the Indians throughout the southern section. These did their full share in strengthening the Creek Confederacy. The following letters, passing between the Southern Indians and Governor Manrique of Pensacola, show the state of the Spanish mind on August 20, 1812, a year before the war was carried to that section. They also show, by Governor Manrique's own admission, that the Americans were at peace with the Spanish, remaining so in spite of their aid to the Creeks, until he opened the ports of Pensacola to Great Britain's fleet.¹

The letter of the Indian chiefs is as follows:

“SEMINOLES—LOWER TOWNS OF THE CREEK
NATION—THE CHIEFS TO THE GOVERNOR
OF PENSACOLA

“AUGUST 7, 1812²

“SIR—

“We take the liberty to subscribe our names, that by this means we may form acquaintance with Your Grace and inform you that we are

¹ The rumor that a Spanish naval force was with the British fleet proved to be false, yet from every indication it is clear that but for internal troubles Ferdinand VII would have materially aided the British in their invasion of the Southern Coast of the American Republic.

² From *Mississippi Provincial Archives*, Spanish Dominion, IX, p. 273. Original in Archives of the Indies, Seville, Spain. Translated by H. H. Knoblock, Assistant, Mississippi Department of Archives and History.

true friends of the Spanish and English Governments. We have known that war was to be declared between the Americans and the English, and also with the Spanish, and if it is so we inform you that the feeling among the chiefs as among the other Indians is general against the Americans. We appeal to Your Grace in order that you may please inform us of the part we ought to take. Your Grace may live persuaded that you can dispose of us in case this notice of war is correct. But Your Grace the Governor probably knows that we are very scantily supplied with arms and ammunition, and that at Fort San Marcos they were accustomed to give to the Indians rations, powder balls, and blankets. Now nothing of this is given them and they are consequently very poor. Will Your Grace inform us if you can order that these gifts again be given to them? When we were recently in Pensacola with Thomas Perryman, the Commandant promised us that he would write to Havana about this. Will Your Grace please send word to us if anything has happened about it? We hope that from your kindness you will take into consideration what we lay before you and in your reply inform us how we are to conduct ourselves and give us the news that comes concerning the war. We send this letter by two Indians whose commissions Your Grace will please order paid and through whom we await your answer in English.

“This from the chiefs of this place who subscribe themselves with their marks.

"The Chiefs

"THOMAS PERRYMAN,

"CHISNAQUI CHIFOLA,

"YOLAHATRO CHEFOLD TORÓN,

"JAMES PERRYMAN,

"FIREWAY RACoon TORÓN,

"WILLIAMS PERRYMAN,

"ETSTRO EMALLACHIZ TLOLLEMALA."

In reply to this letter Governor Manrique wrote:

"MY BELOVED CHIEFS AND GOOD ALLIES:¹

"I have received your letters with the greatest pleasure and, informed of all their contents, I answer you that the war of the Americans with England is a fact, but that up to now there has been none against us. I am grateful to you, and appreciate the good will and disposition with which you offer yourselves in aid to Spain in case of necessity, but for the present you may remain quiet and wait until I advise you, which I shall do as soon as the Americans give reason for it, and be certain that then I shall lose no time in giving you the instructions necessary in the confidence I have in your friendship and valor.

"Remain certain that the Spanish love you with all their heart and that I desire to give you proofs of it. I send you the paper, ink-powder, and paste because there is no sealing wax, and I

¹From *Mississippi Provincial Archives*, Spanish Dominion, Vol. IX, p. 276. Original in Archives of the Indies, Seville, Cuban Papers. Translated by H. H. Knoblock.

have arranged that at San Marcos they will deliver you the presents which I am going to send, and believe, my friends, that if they do not go in abundance, it is because of the great poverty of this Province, and you know very well the state in which the Spanish are, you will know that it is not through the lack of will that they do not send you all which you wish and I desire.

"Your messengers have been shown attention and treated with courtesy and have been given the necessary provisions for their march. They will give you in my name the most expressive tokens of the friendship and good will with which I wish to bind the alliance of the Spanish Nation with the great chiefs and the nation of the Seminoles."

The eagerness of the people of Georgia to see the compact entered into, between that State and the United States in 1802, to extinguish the Indian title to certain lands, was not lost on the Indians and this with other grievances cited had caused a restlessness and dissatisfaction among them that readily deepened into a fixed resentment under the spell of Tecumseh's fiery and eloquent appeals. Much magnetism as an orator and learning have been ascribed to this celebrated chieftain. Not only was he physically a splendid specimen of his race, but historians also agree that he was "masterful in manner, eloquent in speech and learned in the lore of treaties."

While the warriors of many tribes to the north were already in possession of his plans, Tecumseh, who had recently visited the tribes east of the Mississippi and on Lakes Superior, Huron and Erie, inciting them to hostilities against the whites by appeals to both religion and material gain, came south in the summer of 1811 with a view of attaching the southern tribes to his brother, the Prophet, and his army. His task, though a delicate one of much diplomacy and intrigue, was not in vain. Alexander McGillivray,¹ the noted half-breed, sometimes styled the "Emperor of the Creeks," in whose veins ran the blood of the best races of Europe, might have proved a match for Tecumseh in advising against the war, but the mighty barterer and tradesman, diplomat and scholar (as he might well be considered among savages) was dead, and there was none other strong enough to effect peace.

One obstacle loomed high in the pathway of the ardent Tecumseh—the powerful Choctaws were still in open sympathy with the Americans and

¹Alexander McGillivray, perhaps the most remarkable half-breed Indian of America, was the son of Lachlan McGillivray who came from Scotland when a youth of sixteen, tradition says, from a titled home. He came first to the Carolinas and joined the Indian traders in 1735. Later he met the beautiful young Princess Sehoj in the Creek Nation and was married to her about 1738. Princess Sehoj was the daughter of Captain Marchand, a French officer who at one time commanded Fort Toulouse on the Coosa River. The mother of Sehoj was a Creek of the "Clan of the Wind."

no confederacy formed in the South would be safe or lead to victory without their aid. At the intertribal councils, neither the Prophet's incantations nor the inducement of personal gain could affect the imperturbable Pushmataha and his loyal assistants, Moshulitubee and Houma Mingo. To all appeals there was but one answer, that "never in their history had a Choctaw shed the blood of a white man in war." The attitude of the Choctaws meant much to the American cause and while for the first months there was occasional alarm, amounting at one time to a panic, in the main security throughout the war was felt even along the Choctaw borders of the Mississippi Territory.

"Tecumseh," says a contributor to Harper's Encyclopedia of United States History in vivid hyperbole that savors somewhat of fiction, "addressed the assembled Creeks for the first time in the lower part of what is now Autauga County, Alabama, late in October. Soon afterwards, having addressed the Creeks at different points, he approached a great council called by Colonel Hawkins, United States Indian agent, at Tooockabatcha, the ancient Creek capital, where fully 5000 of the nation were gathered. Tecumseh marched with dignity into the square with his train of thirty followers, entirely naked, excepting their flaps and ornaments, their faces painted black, their heads adorned with eagle's feathers, while

buffalo tails dragged behind, suspended by bands around their waists. Like appendages were attached to their arms, and their whole appearance was as hideous as possible, and their bearing uncommonly pompous and ceremonious. They marched round and round in the square, and then, approaching the Creek chiefs, gave them the Indian salutation of a handshake at arm's-length and exchanged tobacco in token of friendship. So they made their appearance each day until Hawkins departed.

"That night a council was held in the great round-house. It was packed with eager listeners. Tecumseh made a fiery and vengeful speech, exhorting the Creeks to abandon the customs of the pale-face and return to those of their fathers: to cast away the plough and loom and cease the cultivation of the soil, for it was an unworthy pursuit for noble hunters and warriors. He warned them that the Americans were seeking to exterminate them and possess their country; and told them that their friends, the British, had sent him from the Great Lakes to invite them to the war-path. The wily Prophet, who had been told by the British when a comet would appear, told the excited multitude that they would see the arm of Tecumseh, like pale fire, stretched out in the vault of heaven at a certain time, and thus they would know by that sign when to begin the war. The people looked upon him with awe, for the fame of Tecumseh and the Prophet had preceded them. Tecumseh continued his mission with success, but

found opponents here and there. Among the most conspicuous of them was Tustinuggee-Thluccho, the 'Big Warrior.' Tecumseh tried every art to convert him to his purpose. At length he said, angrily: 'Tustinuggee-Thluccho, your blood is white. You have taken my Redsticks and my talk, but you do not mean to fight. I know the reason; you do not believe the Great Spirit has sent me. You shall believe it. I will leave directly and go straight to Detroit. When I get there, I will stamp my foot upon the ground and shake down every house in Toockabatcha.'

"Strangely enough, at about the time Tecumseh must have arrived in Detroit, there was heard a deep rumbling underground all over the Alabama region, and there was a heaving of the earth that made the houses of Toockabatcha reel and totter as if about to fall. The startled savages ran out, exclaiming: 'Tecumseh is at Detroit! Tecumseh is at Detroit! We feel the stamp of his foot!' It was the shock of an earthquake that was felt all over the Gulf region in December, 1812. At the same time the comet—the blazing arm of Tecumseh—appeared in the sky. These events made a powerful impression on nearly the whole Creek nation, but it did not move the 'Big Warrior' from his allegiance to the United States."

Though bitterly disappointed in his failure to attach the Choctaws and the Peace Party of the Creek Nation to his cause, the untiring Tecumseh, tall, dignified and graceful, arrayed in royal robes

and flaunting a head-dress with an ominous red plume, had continued in the Indian country pursuing his aims, and accomplishing in a large degree his purpose just as he had done at Vincennes on the Wabash and in the Detroit country. Each day the war spirit of the fierce Muscogee tribe grew, until it finally yielded to the advocate's subtle spell who, in sowing the seeds of war along the Tallapoosa with the hope of benefiting his own race, was willing enough for some of the harvest of the Red Flower to go to his English friends.

Admitting that it was the sudden flaming up of patriotic fires half a century old, it was British gold, also, that now played a part in kindling strife between the American and Indian. The Creek, whose ancestral ferocity had struck terror to many a frontier hearthstone, proved that he still needed no military training in the various diabolical forms of savage warfare.

It is thought by some historians, including Lossing, Drake and Parton, that Tecumseh paid two visits to the Gulf tribes, on the second being accompanied by his brother, the Prophet. Many conflicting statements of local authorities and students have furnished material for investigators and historians concerning his visit south; while a number of authors agree on some points, none seem able to determine with any

degree of certainty how often he came among the Creek Indians. Halbert, one of the latest and best interpreters of Indian life among the southern tribes, leans, I think erroneously, to Beckwith's belief that he came only once, in 1811. Ramsey, Pickett and Moore have taken the position that he paid a second visit. J. F. H. Claiborne, too, is an ardent supporter not only of a second visit, but of an express purpose also on the part of Tecumseh to enlist the Creeks for the British, attributing the tardiness of the militia of the Mississippi Territory in attacking the Indians, as a part of the British forces, to the pacific attitude taken by Colonel Benjamin Hawkins, agent of Indian affairs.¹ However, this author was destined in later years to become a subject for much satire by the painstaking if prosaic investigator, Halbert, who not only found in the accomplished historian's "rich flowers of speech" a source of amusement, but became very impatient with many of his statements. Especially does he doubt his translation of Tecumseh's speech, even going so far as to say that it not only rested on no author-

¹ Benjamin Hawkins was born in Bute County, North Carolina (which was changed to Warren County in 1779), on August 15, 1754, and died at his residence in the Creek Nation, in the exercise of his functions as Superintendent of Indian Affairs, on June 6, 1816. For an extended biography of Colonel Hawkins, containing his valuable service to the country, see Wheeler's "History of North Carolina," pp. 426-432.

ity, but it did not reflect credit on the famous Indian orator and statesman. But giving Halbert due credit for having studied his subject minutely, one cannot forget that Pickett agreed with J. F. H. Claiborne in his estimate of Colonel Hawkins' attitude. Still, it must be admitted that the Alabama historian generally used with great care and caution his original record sources, nearly all of which were furnished him by Claiborne. That Colonel Hawkins for many months influenced General Flournoy, commanding the Seventh Military District, in the matter is quite evident from the latter's correspondence with General Ferdinand L. Claiborne and his persistent refusal to permit the latter to attack the Indians.

The object of Tecumseh's visit is a more important matter, and it is logical to believe that, since the Indians were federating everywhere in the north and joining the Prophet's army with a view of aiding the British, this was the counsel, if not the dictation, of the able Tecumseh to the southern tribes, especially to the Creeks, who were more sympathetic with his scheme and purpose than any other of the Muscogee family.

In vain, then, did Colonel Hawkins strive to keep the peace between the Mississippi Territory and the Creek Indians; but even in the lower country, where his influence was stronger with

them than in the upper, he met with failure; nor did he hesitate to lay on the whites the major part of the blame for the sudden participation in the war.

The Creek country, including the upper and lower divisions, reached from the Oconee River in Georgia to the Alabama River. It was an attractive, well-watered region, and, with a population of 10,000, had established fifty-two towns. It was well supplied with warriors familiar with the use of firearms and highly skilled in all native modes of warfare. Knowing the Indian character, the white people of the Territory, especially those of the Tombigbee, Mobile and Alabama settlements, were never wholly at ease in the thought of having them as such close neighbors.

CHAPTER IV

MILITARY STRENGTH OF THE MISSISSIPPI TERRITORY AT THE OUTBREAK OF THE WAR OF 1812

It is well to give the reader some specific knowledge of the military strength of the Mississippi Territory at the beginning of the War of 1812. The following summary, gathered in the main from the "Encyclopedia of Mississippi History," will give the reader an insight into affairs in the Territory from a local standpoint.¹

At the town of Washington,² the seat of government of the Mississippi Territory, which included what is now Alabama as well as the present State of Mississippi, Governor David Holmes received on Sunday, June 20, 1812, letters from the Tombigbee region assuring him that part of the Creek Nation of Indians was determined on war.³ Colonel James Caller, Colonel Joseph Car-

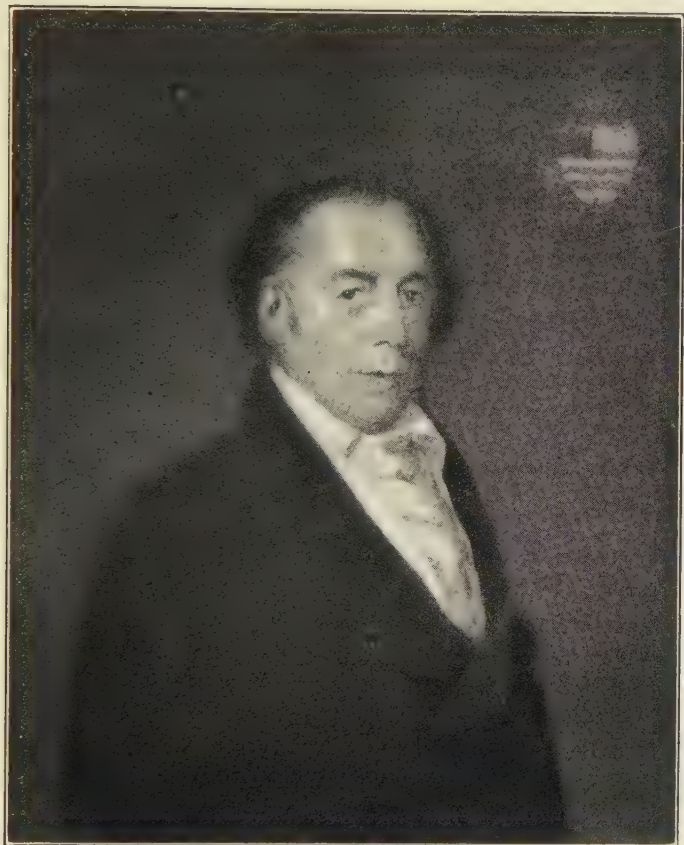
¹ Rowland's "Encyclopedia of Mississippi History" was for the most part compiled from original records.

² Natchez was the first capital of the Mississippi Territory. During W. C. C. Claiborne's administration the capital was moved by act of the Legislature, February 1, 1802, to the little town of Washington, six miles east.

³ See original letters to Governor Holmes relating to the War of 1812 on file in the Mississippi Department of Archives and History.

son and Major John McGrew, officers of the Territorial militia, were the authors of the letters. They bore the date of June 14 and had reached the Governor by express, the horsemen having been charged to travel day and night. Much anxiety was felt, as the route lay through the Choctaw Nation whose attitude in case of war was then in doubt. The friendly attitude of their leading chieftain, Pushmataha, however, somewhat allayed the traveler's fears of that source.

There were other disturbances. At this time Governor Holmes had to look to the organization of the Spanish Coast country between the Pearl River and Perdido, annexed to his territory by Act of Congress. There was the revolution, too, in and about San Antonio in which some Mississippians were involved. More than all else was the prospect of war with Britain. Before the addition of the Mobile strip he had a military organization representing thirteen regiments of militia. In the Tombigbee-Alabama settlements, now in danger from the Creeks, he had stationed Colonel James Caller as the commanding officer of militia. In the same region at Fort Stoddard there was a detachment of United States troops commanded by Major John Bowyer, and Cantonment Washington was the headquarters of Colonel Leonard



Gov. David Holmes.

Covington.¹ The latter's advice the Governor immediately sought, and the action taken by them placed the Mississippi Territory in the War of 1812. An immediate request was sent to Major Bowyer to send out a full company of regulars and to station them on the extreme frontier. To Colonel Caller another dispatch went to send a party of mounted militia with the regulars. Further instructions held an order to detail from the 6th, 8th, 9th and 12th Regiments of militia, one major, six captains, six lieutenants, six ensigns, 360 privates, with the competent number

¹ Covington, Leonard, native of Maryland, entered the United States army in 1792, in the light dragoons; was promoted rapidly to lieutenant and captain; had a horse shot under him at Fort Recovery, Ohio, and was distinguished for gallantry at the battle of the Maumee, 1794. Resigning in 1795, he returned to Maryland, and was elected to Congress from the St. George district. He returned to the service when there was danger of war with England in 1809, as colonel of light dragoons, and was for a time stationed in Mississippi Territory, where Governor Holmes called him in consultation at the beginning of the Creek War. He was promoted to brigadier-general, August 1, 1813, and called to the Canadian frontier, where he participated in the unfortunate campaign of General Wilkinson, and was mortally wounded in the battle of Chrysler's Field, November 11, 1813, dying three days later. He was riding a white charger, cheering his men to attack the British intrenchment, when he fell. At that time his wife and six children were making their home with Alexander Covington near the town of Washington, where they continued to reside. Levin, a son of General Covington, became judge of probate of Adams County; a daughter married the well known Mississippi geologist and author, B. L. C. Wailes. Alexander Covington, a brother of the general, a native of Prince George, Virginia, resided in Mississippi forty years, and was a man of great intelligence and social powers, served as county judge many years, and died at Warren City, October 16, 1848, aged 71 years.

of non-commissioned officers. These were to be held in readiness to march at the shortest notice. In case the Indians should enter the country in any great number and with hostile intentions, this regiment was instructed to unite with the regular troops. The militia were for the most part unarmed. Colonel Caller was directed to obtain 200 stands of arms from Major Bowyer and all militia were to be rendezvoused at Fort St. Stephens. There is some question as to whether the whole battalion was called out for service until later.

The express from James Monroe, Secretary of State, announcing the declaration of war with Great Britain, was addressed to Governor Holmes on June 19, 1812, and received by the Governor by way of Cantonment St. Tammany, July 11, 1812.

On July 14, the Governor issued his general orders announcing the declaration of war, as commander-in-chief making such disposition of the militia of the Territory as he deemed best calculated to protect the citizens thereof, requesting them to maintain order and make war upon the enemy "with all the effect that the Territory's forces and ability would permit." The confidence with which he relied on the spirit of nationalism in the Mississippi militia is apparent throughout his orders and messages. That portion of his com-

munication to the legislature on November 3, dealing directly with the war, is quoted in full:

“The weighty and important duties that have devolved upon the executive branch of our local government in consequence of the eventful and momentous crisis that has occurred in the national concerns of our country, render the meeting of the legislature at this time peculiarly gratifying to me and highly interesting to your constituents.

“The people of the United States from their situation, from the nature of their political institutions which have solely in view the liberty and happiness of the citizens, and from the strictly neutral and impartial course pursued towards the belligerents of Europe by their government, might in justice have expected to remain undisturbed by the contending powers. But truth and justice are not the attributes of governments founded upon tyranny or supported by corruption. Pride, avarice, and an insatiable ambition ever prompt them to extend their baneful influence and effects, unrestrained by the rights of others, and regardless of the happiness of those they profess to protect.

“No nation ever endeavored with more sincerity than the United States to avoid the war in which she is now engaged. The aggressions, insults and outrages upon our lawful commerce and rights of sovereignty, were borne with until longer forbearance would have constituted the crime of submission. No efforts on the part of our government could divert Great Britain from her de-

terminated purpose of attempting to crush American commerce, and if possible American independence. Propositions which could have been accepted by her without in the least degree wounding her national pride, but evidently calculated to promote her best interests, were rejected upon pretenses too palpably erroneous for any one to believe that they were advanced with sincerity. Her disposition to depredate and insult seemed to increase with every effort on our part for amicable adjustment. The American government became sensible that the honor and rights of the nation demanded that expostulation, remonstrance, and all other measures short of actual war should cease, that the alternative of an honorable resistance or a base surrender of incontrovertible rights was placed before them. To have doubted as to the correct course under such convictions would have been dishonorable to themselves and disgraceful to their constituents. War, therefore, was resorted to as the only measure that could be taken to rescue the nation from abject degradation. This important change in our national affairs made it the duty of the Chief Executive of the Territory to take such measures for the defences of the country, and to aid in the war against the enemy, as his powers and the existing laws would authorize. Under this impression I issued an order on the 14th of July last directing a portion of the militia to be held in readiness for immediate service. At that time it was uncertain when this force would be required, but I consid-

ered that some preparatory measures were called for by the existing state of public affairs. On the sixth of September in pursuance of a requisition made by the authority of the general government, an additional number was directed to be selected for actual service, and the whole of force detailed from the regiments west of Pearl River amounting to about seven hundred were ordered to rendezvous at Cantonment Washington. It is with much satisfaction, I assure you, Gentlemen, that on this occasion the militia of the Territory from every quarter evinced a degree of patriotism and determination to support the rights of their Country highly honorable to them as citizens and soldiers."

In this spirit the first detachment of Mississippi militia in the service of the United States was placed in readiness.

In his orders the Governor called for details from militia regiments as follows: From the 1st Regiment (Amite County), one company; from the 2d Regiment (Wilkinson County), one company; from the 3d Regiment (Adams County), three companies, including the volunteer companies of Captains Becket and Painboeuff; from the 7th Regiment (Baldwin County), one company; from the 4th, 5th, 10th, 11th and 13th Regiments (Jefferson, Claiborne, Warren, Franklin, Marion Counties), each parts of a company. The previ-

ous orders to the 6th, 8th, 9th and 12th Regiments (Washington, Baldwin, Wayne and Greene) exempted those counties from this detail. In addition to these details the cavalry troops were to be in readiness to take the field whenever ordered.

Ferdinand L. Claiborne, recently appointed brigadier-general of militia, was entrusted with the execution of the order and General Wilkinson, in command of the United States Military Department, was asked to supply the necessary equipment. General Claiborne reported August 18, 1812: "It will be particularly gratifying to your excellency to be informed that the requisition has been filled principally by voluntary enrollment." The arms, ammunition and camp equipage were delivered at Natchez landing by steamboat, September 19, 1812, and a little later in that month about 600 men were in camp at Cantonment Washington. A further detail of 300 men was then called for. On November 3, the regiment began its march to Baton Rouge with General Claiborne in command with the rank of colonel. Captain A. H. Holmes, brother of the Governor, was inspector of the regiment during its organization. The period of service for this command, which was known as "the detachment of Mississippi militia in the service of the United States," was six months. The legislature that winter by

resolution acknowledged and praised the response to the public call. When the term of service was near expiration the greater part of this command reinlisted in the regiment to be mentioned later.

Another organization under the orders of the Governor in the year 1812 was a battalion in the Mobile region under Colonel Joseph Carson. At Natchez a volunteer company was formed by men legally exempt from military duty, which the Governor assigned to patrol duty.

Though to all appearances secure in the military defense of the State and even more in the long peace that had been maintained, the people of the Mississippi Territory, the pioneer settlements along the Tombigbee and Alabama especially, were not without apprehension that trouble could be expected from the Creeks any day. As far back as both French and Spanish possession sparse settlements had been established along the Tombigbee and Alabama Rivers. To this hiding-place Tories and Loyalists came in great numbers and lived amicably with the wealthy and influential natives and half-breeds. No civil form of government existed among them, all dwelling as thoughtlessly as the birds in a retreat where neither priest nor king prescribed. With the coming of the Americans these settlements increased rapidly, and at the period of this history numbered

about 2000 white inhabitants, with as many slaves. The people in their manners and mode of life, though now governed by the laws of the Territory, were unlike those of the high-bred communities of the older counties near Natchez and along the Mississippi. The spirit of nationalism, however, was very strong among them, even the Tory by this time having become loyal to the young Republic. Border contact with the Indians had established in many instances close social relations between the two races and intermarriage occurred frequently, especially between prominent American settlers and the aristocratic descendants of Lachlan McGillivray, the latter being thought eligible to any social distinction desired. "To this circle belonged," says Pickett, "the Taits, Weatherfords, Durants, the proud Linders and the wealthy Mims."

CHAPTER V

THE CREEKS DETERMINE ON WAR; CREEK BRANCH
OF THE MUSCOGEES

PREPARATION on the part of the Mississippi Territory was not made any too soon. The Prophet with many warriors, urged by the ardent Tecumseh, had for the past year been actively engaged in hostilities in the North in aiding the British, and, finally, by midsummer of 1813, war-clouds, too distinct to be mistaken, had gathered in the Southern country. No historian can depict the situation better than contemporary records, and the following letter from Judge Toulmin at Fort Stoddert to General F. L. Claiborne reflects clearly the state of affairs among the Creeks during the month of July, 1813:

"You have done me the honor," Judge Toulmin writes, "to request my opinion relative to the hostile disposition of the Creek Indians.

"My own apprehensions on this subject have grown out of transient circumstances as they have occurred, but are not founded on what would be deemed legal evidence.

"I may safely say that I am sufficiently satisfied

—but as I would not express opinions which may influence on so important an occasion the conduct of others without bringing into view the grounds and reasons of those opinions—I will endeavor to trace back the impressions which have been made upon my own mind and will lay before you the result.

“1. I think it is about two months since Col. Hawkins informed me that he anticipated civil war among the Creeks—which was notoriously originating in a good degree in the vigorous measures taken by the heads of the nation to punish those of their tribe who had made war on the people of the United States.

“Where the cause of the white people was the primary source of domestic disturbance in the nation, it was reasonable to suppose that the interest and safety of white people would be materially involved in the progress and issue of those disturbances. Col. Hawkins accordingly soon after sent his family from the nation and has since removed himself.

“2. A few weeks after this Gen. Wilkinson was about to pass through the nation but found the prospect of disturbances so alarming that he halted for a guard. As soon as he had an opportunity, he made himself acquainted with the spirit prevailing in the Indian nation and satisfied that the hostilities were intended, he sent an express back to me with a letter on the subject—a copy or the substance of which I immediately did myself the honor to transmit to you, to Gen. Flournoy, to

Govr. Holmes and to Col. Bowyer. This letter evinced his conviction that we were on the eve of an Indian war and that immediate measures of defense ought to be adopted.

“3. Mr. Saml. Manae, a half-breed, well known to all persons conversant with the Creek nation, whose veracity I have never heard impeached and who has certainly as much at stake as any man in the country, assured me that he had had a conversation with High Head, one of the chiefs who has lately been at Pensacola and who was then on his way—in which High Head acknowledged to him that their object was to make war on the American people, that they had no animosity against the half-breeds, but wished to have them as partners in the general scheme, and that as to going to war with their own people they had no idea of the kind but merely wished to put about eight chiefs out of the way who had signalized themselves by their anxiety to preserve peace with the whites.

“4. The letter from the Choctaw chief, Mushulatubbe to Mr. Geo. Gaines fully corresponds with the account given by Mr. Manae. He had sent messengers into the Creek nation who had clearly ascertained their hostile disposition towards the people of the United States and had seen them dancing the war-dance, a national ceremony preparatory to warlike operations. No suggestions existed that their hostilities were intended against other Indians. They avowed that they were to be against us:—and some few rest-

less, misguided Choctaws had unhappily imbibed the spirit of the Muscogees.

“5. It is a fact concerning which, I believe, there is no doubt that some of the Creeks have participated in the northern warfare from the time of its commencement. They have committed murders on our peaceable citizens in their passage to and from the north. Some of them and particularly the Little Warrior have been put to death since their return. Their friends, their confederates and their relatives survive. These are the men who have organized the present confederacy and overthrown the legitimate government of the Creek nation. They are well known to the British and have been patronized by them. The Little Warrior was furnished with a letter from a British General to the Governor of Pensacola containing as *they* say a requisition for arms and ammunition, and as *he* says, merely an introduction and recommendation of them to his notice. On the strength of this, however, they applied for ammunition and have obtained it. Whilst in Pensacola, they avowed their intention of making war on the American people:—they danced the war-dance:—they told the Governor that 19 towns had joined them, and that in those towns there were 4800 men.

“6. A party of the Indians going to Pensacola attacked the post rider and robbed him of his mail. They shot at him and killed his horse. They carried the mail to Pensacola and said that they had killed the post rider. They refused to give it

up, when the governor informed them that he would send it to Mobile.

“7. There is a general impression that hostilities are meditated against the United States. No one travels thro’ the Creek nation. All intercourse between this country and Georgia has ceased. The carrying of the mail is completely suspended.

“8. The general commotion through the Creek nation is a matter of notoriety. Their plantations are, in a great degree, neglected and uncultivated:—and the houses of all who resided near the road are abandoned. This state of things seems a prelude to war.

“I believe that all the circumstances which I have stated can be established on oath:—and under this belief—I submit it to you, Sir, whether I am not warranted in the opinion that war exists between a part of the Creek nation and the people of the United States.”

The counsel of Tecumseh, who was fighting in the North, was treasured deep in the hearts of the Creeks, and with them war had become an obsession. The historian, Anderson, attributes the suddenness of its approach to the unfortunate execution of three Indians by the whites for the murder of a converted Indian boy. Other local incidents have, with a great deal of gravity, been made to appear as the sparks that started the flame, reminding one of the part that the question

of slavery played in the War for Southern Independence which, with compromise failing, was inevitable sooner or later in defense of Constitutional liberty.

Passing on from the first signs of hostilities between the whites and Indians, it is evident, from many of the record sources of that period, that there was in the spring of 1813 a definite war-party formed among the Creeks, their old confederacy had been revived and strengthened and what they called their "broken days" were nearing the end. By July 25 the noted half-breed chieftain, William Weatherford, was a suspected member of the party.¹ He was of the famous McGillivray clan and, if not at first, became a strong sympathizer of the Creeks, finally to become their leader. His Indian name, though he was more often called "Red Eagle," was Hopponika Futsahia, which Woodward interprets as "Truth Maker." It is said by partial biographers that he counseled against war and for some time held aloof. Many notable half-breeds, as in the instance of Moniac, refused to take the "black drink" which was now demanded of them.² The

¹ It seems that Weatherford had, in the beginning, been acting with the white people of the Territory, as shown by a letter from Gen. Wilkinson to Judge Toulmin dated June 25, 1813.

² This drink was a kind of tea made of the leaves of the Ilex Cassine or holly of the Gulf States. After a visit to the country in 1777, William Bartram, in his description of the Creek rotunda,

beverage, nevertheless, was brewed, and all, though ever so far removed in blood, were required to partake of it, or on refusing to suffer death.

War then on the part of the Creeks for the extermination of the Americans of the Mississippi Territory had been fully determined on. The Alibamos in the upper district especially were fierce in their attitude, these having been for some time bitterly resentful of the encroachments on the hunting grounds. The deposition of Samuel Moniac, taken by Judge Harry Toulmin, though not considered seriously by some historians, on account of the half-breed's open disapproval of Tecumseh, indicates a well-formed plan to attack from the Tensas to the Southern Coast.

The struggle of the Indians everywhere to regain their lost territory in North America was soon to be carried in earnest to the South. It seems a coincidence that they were allied with a nation that was also seeking to recover possession of some portion, at least, of a like territory; for it

which was erected upon an artificial mound, gives an elaborate account of the ceremonies in the rotunda connected with partaking of the "black drink." He states that the chief first puffed a few whiffs from the sacred pipe, blowing the whiffs ceremoniously upward towards the sun, or, as it was generally supposed, to the Great Spirit, and then puffing the smoke from the pipe towards the four cardinal points. The pipe was then carried to different persons and smoked in a similar manner by them in turn, after which the drink was solemnly presented to each warrior present.

is quite evident that the British at this juncture were using the Creek Indians against the American Republic. A state of civil war, existing between Tecumseh's followers and the peace party in the Nation, to some extent retarded the preparation for hostilities, though it is certain that the "Dance of the Lakes," taught by the prophets, was in progress. Many of the prophets in their zeal met death at the hands of the unbelievers, as the peaceful Indians were styled. On the other hand, sudden death was the portion of many of the peace party, as in the instance of the putting to death of a son of the great McGillivray, one of the Singers and a nephew of Isaac the chief. The Prophet Francis, as were all the Creek prophets, was very zealous in condemnation of all dissenters.¹

Before the initial battle between this strong nation and the Americans to settle their many differences is described, it is due the former to give here a short history of this branch of the famous Muscogee race. Occupying a region that reached from the Atlantic to the Tombigbee and Alabama, including portions of the States of Georgia and Alabama and all of Florida, the Seminoles there being a kindred tribe; they had developed a civilization that held the forms and customs and was marked

¹ These prophets, instructed by Tecumseh, claimed to be directed by an unseen power.

by many of the best characteristics of the most advanced tribes on the North American continent. However, it must be admitted that the Creeks exhibited a ferociousness that did not characterize the neighboring tribes—the Natchez, Choctaws and Cherokees—though no tribe existed that did not have this trait well enough developed, and all in war resorted to the massacre.

This branch of the Muscogees was nicknamed “Creeks” by the Europeans, on account of the many streams that flowed through their country. Referring to an older generation a writer says:

“The men of the Creek Confederacy were well-proportioned, active and graceful; the women were smaller, exquisitely formed and some of them were very beautiful. In summer both sexes went without clothing, excepting a drapery of Spanish moss that was fastened at the waist and fell to the thighs. The principal people painted their faces and bodies in fanciful colors, and fops sometimes appeared in beautiful mantles of feathers or deer-skins and on their heads were lofty plumes of the eagle and the flamingo. The houses of the chiefs stood upon mounds, sometimes in the form of a great pavilion, and the inside of their winter dwellings were daubed with clay. Hunting, fishing and cultivating their fertile lands were their employment, for they seldom made aggressive war. They were skilful artisans in making arms, houses, barges, canoes, and va-

rious kinds of ornaments. They made pottery for kitchen service and some of it was very ornamental. Fortifications were constructed, with moats and walled towns, and grand and beautiful temples abounded. They made mats of split cane with which they covered their houses and upon which they sat. These resembled the rush carpeting of the Moors. In their temples, dedicated to the worship of the sun, were votive offerings of pearls and rich furs. They regarded the sun as the superior deity, and in all their invocations they appealed to it as to God. To it they made sacrifices of grain and animals. The chief, while living, was held in the greatest veneration as priest and king. As a symbol of devotion to him of the entire strength of the nation, the sacrifice of the first-born male child was required, while the young mother was compelled to witness the slaughter of her child. Their marriages were attended with great displays of ornaments and flowers, and at the setting of the sun the bride and groom and their friends prostrated themselves before that luminary and implored his blessing. Like the Iroquois, the civil power in their government was widely distributed; and, like the Iroquois, the Creeks were an exception in their approach to civilization to all the Indian tribes of North America. Such were the Creeks or Muscogee Indians when first seen by Europeans.”¹

¹Bartram, writing of Creek culture in 1777, says, “Some of their favorite songs and dances they have learned from the Choctaws, but it seems that these people are very eminent themselves for poetry and music; every town among them strives to

The English, in the main, had been the Creeks' choice of the Europeans, the English governors, Johnstone, Browne and Chester of Pensacola having kept the peace with them by the most extravagant use of presents such as blankets, rum and gewgaws. During the Revolutionary War they were staunch allies of England and many Tories sought their towns in efforts to stir them up against the frontier settlements. A burning patriotism and love of country were chief characteristics of the race. In 1802 they began ceding their lands to the United States, their dissatisfaction increasing with every concession made to the white race. Though long kept in peace by the colonizing whites, their martial spirit was pronounced and just prior to their outburst with the people of the Mississippi Territory they had been engaged in a fierce civil war.

Colonel Benjamin Hawkins saw in the Creeks of his day many evidences of their former high state of civilization, though some historians set aside as very doubtful Hawkins' estimate and bring the Muscogee to this region from the northwest at a later day, affirming that a superior race had met De Soto. The Muscogees claimed that their race came out of the bosom of the Nanih excel each other in composing new songs, and by a custom among them they must have one new song for exhibition at every annual busk."

Waiya and reverently regarded the great mound beside which they first dwelt as their mother.¹ As the Muscogees were sun worshipers, it is natural to believe that there had been a day when this sacred mound was used as a temple for the worship of the sun by the various tribes, while there are many evidences that it was also used as a national center for tribal councils. But while all Muscogee tribes have regarded the Nanih Waiya (Ishki chito, the "Great Mother") as the place of their creation, another legend, as told by Peter Folsom, treats of their migration to the south from the far northwest. Though the Choctaw and Creek branches of the great Muscogee race had now drifted far apart, hardly acknowledging their consanguinity, both protested that they would never leave their "Mother," the sacred Nanih Waiya, while the patriotic Creek showed that he was always ready to fight for the land of his nativity.

¹Nanih Waiya or Nuniah Waiya, the sacred mound of the Choctaws, is the most important of the prehistoric mounds in the State of Mississippi. It is located in Winston County on the west side of Nanih Waiya Creek near the Neshoba County line.

CHAPTER VI

ENCOUNTER EXPECTED BETWEEN THE TERRITORIAL MILITIA AND THE CREEK INDIANS

THE first definite act of armed warfare between the inhabitants of the Mississippi Territory and the Creek Nation was the encounter of Burnt Corn Creek on July 27, 1813.¹ The state of affairs just prior to this encounter is reflected in the following letter from Captain J. L. Kennedy, addressed from McIntosh Bluff, July 24, 1813, to General Claiborne:

"I arrived at this place on the 21st of this instant from *Mobile Point*, & the first time I have been absent one hour since I have entered the army, and found the whole country deserting their Homes on the account of the Indians—The *War Party* in the Creek Nation have killed all the chiefs that were friendly to the U. States. Col. Hawkins has left the Nation and about two hundred and eighty men are now in Pensacola obtaining ammunition from the Spanish Government on an order from Canada.² The whole of the Creek

¹ The name of the place where this battle occurred has been variously given; in some reports it is called the "Wolf Path."

² An attack by the British and Spanish on the Mississippi Territory in the early summer of 1813 was thought to be not improb-

Nation is for *war* except those who have fled to us. They have robbed the mail which they have taken to Pensacola—we have sent men to Pensacola, and find that the Indians intend to attack the Tensas settlements on their return home. The inhabitants have called on me—but I have not the power to protect them. I have been to see Captain Dent and he has spared all the men he can from his *command*. I shall cross today with all the militia I can muster and the Volunteers to Tensas, where I shall form a junction with Caller and we intend to attack the Indians on their return from Pensacola. I would give the world for my Company, which is now at the Point. I have eighty the finest fellows you ever saw and now it is the time to make *my fortune*. *Destruction* and ruin awaits this country without you arrive in eight days, the inhabitants are without arms or ammunition—cant you leave your Baggage under a proper command and reach us with your Troops. We have sent to Col. Bowyer at the Point but General Flournoy is still sick at the Bay of St. Lewie. I have sent Sergeant Byord with *this* together with Judge Toulmin's letters. My furlough is out the last of this month and I must then return and join my Company at *Mobile Point* a second *time*."

A great deal of correspondence passed between General Thomas Flournoy, Commander of the
able. See a letter on file in the Mississippi Department of Archives and History from General Thomas Flournoy to General F. L. Claiborne dated June, 1813.

District, and Governor Manrique of Pensacola, relative to the United States mail bags being seized by the Creeks and carried to Pensacola, in which General Flournoy displayed a thorough understanding of the situation as the following letter indicates:¹

“SIR

“The 27th of last month I had the honor to answer that of Your Excellency of the 13th of the same, directed to the officer commanding the Town of Mobile, and I regret that some delays which happened to the mails should have been the cause that Your Excellency has not received them some time ago.

“Now I must say to Your Excellency that I am well informed that three recent mail-bags of the United States in their passage through the country of the Creeks were taken by a party of Indians and carried to Pensacola. If this is true I hope that Your Excellency will have the kindness to deliver them to the officer sent to solicit them.

“Also I have been advised that a large party of Indians was recently in Pensacola, from which place armed and equipped they began their march towards the frontier settlements of the Mississippi Territory. In a time when the most profound peace reigns between our Governments, I can find no reason which would induce me to be-

¹ From *Mississippi Provincial Archives*, Spanish Dominion, Vol. IX, p. 257. Original in *Archives of the Indies*, Seville, Cuban Papers. Translated by H. H. Knoblock.

lieve that these Indians should have been armed against the people of the United States by the authorities of the Spanish nation. I cannot but complain in the name of my government that they should have been permitted to pass without any opposition in the midst of the territory over which Your Excellency presides, with the manifest intention of making an inroad upon the territory of the United States. Your Excellency must know that this could justly be considered by the United States of America as an infraction of the laws of nations and as an act of hostility on the part of your nation against the American Government.

"In order to prevent the consequences which could result from a proceeding of this nature, I beg Your Excellency to tell me if he has incited or permitted the declared enemies of the United States to arm and equip themselves within the limits of West Florida, or if it is with your permission that these enemies have passed through the middle of your country.

"I have the honor to be with great respect,

"Your Excellency's obedient servant,

"THOMAS FLOURNOY, Brigadier General
commanding the Seventh Military
District.

"HIS EXCELLENCY DON MATEO GONZALEZ
MANRIQUE, Governor of Pensacola."

CHAPTER VII

BATTLE OF BURNT CORN CREEK

THE Creeks, numbering about 300 picked warriors, had gathered in camp at the Holy Ground according to information that had been given out by General James Wilkinson, who to the relief of the military departments was soon to leave for his new post in Canada, General Thomas Flournoy taking his place as commander of the United States troops in the Southern District. The Creek party moved into camp on their return from Pensacola, where they had been for a supply of arms and ammunition furnished them—the Americans had every right to believe—by the Spanish. They also desired to come in touch with the British in the southern seas. Planning openly at the Holy Ground—according to the testimony of Mrs. Ward, who had been captured and held as a prisoner—to attack the white and half-breed settlements on the river, it is logical to think that, now in possession of arms and ammunition, they meant to carry out their threatened purpose.

The Creeks were under the command of Peter

McQueen, a noted war chief, Jim Boy, one of the most chivalrous, gallant and humane warriors of his tribe,¹ and the despicable Prophet Joseph Francis, commanding in the order named: the Tallassees, Atossees and Alibamos, a proud confederacy known as the "Red Sticks," a military organization that was to win a reputation for great valor and steadfastness of purpose. It was a part of the old Confederacy that reached back before the day when eight mighty tribes made a treaty with Oglethorpe in 1732, a union doubtless brought about by a long preserved story of the rough treatment of De Soto, who had passed through the Muscogee Nation in 1540. The Creeks in the far west to this day call the war in the Mississippi Territory in 1813 the "Red Sticks War" and have always been proud of the title. In this last fierce encounter with the white race in the South, their war clubs were painted red and they wore the significant red feather among the white plumes in their head dress, in keeping with time-honored customs.

The exposed condition of the pioneer settlements along the Tombigbee and Alabama Rivers

¹This Indian chief's name is sometimes given as High Headed Jim. By some he was thought to have been the little boy Sonata, befriended by the McGirths, a frontier family that he helped to escape at Fort Mims. His devotion to Mrs. McGirth and her daughters and the humanity evinced in his treatment of the white prisoners laid him open to much suspicion on the part of the "Red Sticks."

now deserves attention, for it was there that the militia and the volunteer troops of the Mississippi Territory bore the brunt of the war several months before General Andrew Jackson arrived on the scene.

Pickett, in his description of the exposed eastern border, while seeming ignorant of the military strength of the Mississippi Territory and of the large part taken by Governor Holmes in prosecuting the war, gives the reader a clear idea of the condition of the sparse settlements that, notwithstanding Colonel Hawkins' optimistic views, were really in danger of momentary attack from their fierce neighbors. The latter had been "taking the war-talk," brandishing their war-clubs and getting themselves ready for many days. The news had flashed through the white settlements, too, that they had publicly danced the ceremonial war-dance, the famous "Dance of the Lakes" taught them by Tecumseh, which meant immediate battle. Consequently, the party of painted and armed warriors returning from Pensacola to the Holy Ground were easily taken for belligerents.

The troops that hastily gathered to intercept the war party were called out by Colonel James Caller,¹ the senior militia officer on the frontier sta-

¹ This follows Pickett, Halbert and J. F. H. Claiborne. For another version in which it is claimed that Colonel Caller was

tioned in Washington County, now in Alabama.¹ This force, composed of a handful of militia, was reinforced at Fort Glass by a company of volunteers under the famous border hero, Sam Dale, whose marvelous exploits in the Southwest, though unknown to history, rank with all such feats as "The Charge of the Light Brigade." Walter G. Creagh, another valiant frontiersman, was second in command. These were joined later by the celebrated half-breed, Captain Dixon Bailey, whose association, training and patriotism had allied him with his white kinsmen. The whole force numbered only one hundred and eighty men, many of whom were drawn from the struggling element of society. Though fond of the chase and rough and ready frontier bout or joust they were unused to actual war. In no sense were they a match for the band of 300 picked and armed warriors well prepared for battle.

On their way from Pensacola, the Creeks, on July 27, reached the famous spring on Burnt Corn Creek, soon to become the scene of battle. The place is described with much minuteness by local historians. On coming to the se-

not present, see letter on file in the Mississippi Historical Department from Judge Toulmin to Governor Holmes, dated August 2, 1813.

¹Alabama was at that time the eastern portion of the Mississippi Territory and, as it had never borne the name of Alabama, authors confuse the reader when referring to it by that name.

cluded spot, the Indians threw themselves from their smoking ponies and hurriedly formed a camp, where they rested and feasted with no thought of imminent danger. When the hastily collected troops of Colonel Caller cautiously approached and, quietly dismounting, charged them, the idling party was taken completely by surprise. The Indians, however, instantly flew to arms and returned the fire of their white assailants without a moment's hesitation. After an unsuccessful resistance, they fled in wild disorder into the canebrakes and undergrowth fastnesses, from which with sharp eyes they soon discovered the weakness of their foe, the number being less on account of the absence of many who were still pursuing the fleeing savages. The victors were busy looting the camp, appropriating their findings and carrying off the best horses, when the wrathful Creeks secreted in the thickets of cane poured a volley of rifle balls into the party. Sweeping from their hiding-places, they reassembled and gave open battle to the Americans, attacking them with guns, war-clubs and tomahawks with such sudden fury that consternation reigned supreme among the occupants of the camp.

So fierce was the onslaught of the infuriated Creeks that the raw militia could not reassemble their broken ranks, though constantly urged by

their Colonel to face the foe. Greed, too, had possessed some of them, and, though they dreaded the scalping knife of the brutal Creek, they hoped to get away with the horses and other loot, trusting to his poor marksmanship, which had never been an accomplishment of which he could boast when the rifle was the weapon in question. In vain their leader urged them to re-form and give battle to the red-skins, but only eighty men could be found willing to contend with the savage horde. These, commanded by Captains Dale, Bailey and Smoot, faced the enemy unflinchingly, giving blow for blow and for a time forcing them back, when the heroic Dale was struck by a rifle ball which lodged near the backbone. He continued to fight desperately until compelled to quit the field. The battle lasted about three hours, the Indians fighting with fierce tenacity. When the encounter was over the Americans had retreated, but not without carrying off many of the pack-horses, probably not concerning themselves about the fighting, since war had not been openly declared.

It is generally conceded by historians—as also by the writer—that the Indians worsted the frontier militia and the volunteer forces at the battle of Burnt Corn. The victory, whatever there was of victory, belonged to the Creek warriors. But when one takes into consideration the long peace

that had existed between the white people and the Indians and the growing contempt on the part of the former for the latter as a rival of any sort, also the fact that the Indians, now ready in spirit for war, had determined on it many months before, and kept their preparations secret, it is not surprising that the hurriedly mustered forces of Colonel Caller were unprepared for serious fighting. Certainly, in later engagements with the foe no act of recreancy has been reported, but, to the contrary, a spirit of restless daring with plenty of hazard and adventure marked the career of the frontier soldier dwelling remote from the older communities of the Mississippi Territory. Like all such spots in America, these frontier river settlements were breeding places of romantic and chivalrous adventure.

Participants in the Burnt Corn engagement reappear in later fierce combats where we find Dale, Bailey, Smoot, May, Armstrong, Baldwin, Lewis, Glass, Henry, Hollinger, Bullard, and Bradberry conspicuous for courage of the highest order. These, with many other better trained but not more chivalrous troops from the older population of the Territory near Natchez, fought heroically for American freedom and make up the famous roster of the Mississippi soldiers in the War of 1812 presented in the first publication

of this narrative. Though late, it is well that their names and deeds should be recorded in history. As one historian has said in substance, the vanquishers of the Pequots, King Philip, Pontiac and the Narragansetts have been crowned with laurels; but of the soldiery of the Mississippi Territory, who so heroically helped Jackson and Claiborne to conquer the fierce Creek Nation and to drive the British out of the Southern country, little or nothing has been said.

That one of the fiercest and most extended wars ever engaged in by the Indians of North America took place wholly within the confines of the Mississippi Territory is well worthy of note by the historian. Its people bore the brunt of the war, suffering the tragedy of the burnt home and murdered wife and child, as well as the dangers of the battlefield; yet one rarely comes upon a mention of Governor Holmes or of the exploits of his troops in the histories of the war in this section. It causes the thought to arise that the bold effrontery with which the American historian sometimes ignores the truth in this and other periods of American history is enough to make one doubtful of all history. The historian may be excused for getting his dates wrong at times, but his sense of justice should always be keen and his research ample enough for him to do justice to all.

CHAPTER VIII

GENERAL CLAIBORNE ORDERED TO FORT STODDERT;
FORTS AND STOCKADES ALONG THE FRONTIER

THROUGHOUT the Creek War it was Mississippi and Tennessee troops mainly who were engaged in the fighting; and since the 1st Regiment of Mississippi Infantry, United States Volunteers, made so vital a part of the army gathered to quell the Creek uprising, its formation and officers will here be given, all statements having been based on original records:

“This regiment was organized at Baton Rouge, beginning in January, 1813, with the re-enlisting members of the Mississippi Regiment mentioned, as a nucleus, recruited by volunteers from the Territory. Cowles Mead¹ was first commissioned as Colonel and Joseph Carson as Major, but Mead soon resigned and Carson was made Colonel and Daniel Beasley, General Claiborne’s aide, was appointed Major. Lieut. W. R. DeLoach was Adjutant; Lieut. B. F. Salvage, Quartermaster; William R. Cox, Surgeon’s Mate. The companies were commanded by Captains Philip A. Engle,

¹ Mead resigned to make a canvass for Territorial delegate to Congress, which resulted in his defeat for that office.

Archilaus Wells, Randall Jones, William Jack, William C. Mead, Benjamin Dent, Hutton Middleton, Abram M. Scott, James Foster, L. V. Foelckil, C. G. Johnson, and Hans Morrison. The First Lieutenants were James Bailey, Richard Bowman, A. L. Osborn, William Morgan, J. D. Rodgers, W. R. DeLoach, Theron Kellogg, A. Montgomery, John Camp, Alexander Calvit, John Allen, Robert Layson and Benjamin F. Salvage. Second Lieutenants, Kean Caldwell, Charles Moore, Charles Baron, W. M. Osborn, N. Lockridge, R. C. Anderson, George Dougherty, Robert Swan, James Luckett, George H. Gibbs, Robert Burton and D. M. Callihan. Ensigns, Stephen Mays, Y. R. McDonald, Benjamin Blanton, Benjamin Stowell, William S. Britt, Isaac W. Davis, Robert Davis, Charles West, Samuel Guest and Richard Smith (Register of the Army, 1813). A morning report dated at Liberty, July 18th, lists the Captains as Jack, Engle, Jones, Mead, Painboeuff, Dent, Scott, Middleton, Johnson, Foster, Brandon, and Morrison with an aggregate present and absent of 402."

This regiment and a Louisiana regiment,¹ organized at the same time and place, formed a brigade which General Ferdinand L. Claiborne of Natchez was assigned to command, he, as has al-

¹ The history of the service of the Louisiana Regiment is so meager that it is impossible to tell whether or not it served as a whole during the Creek war. Louisiana volunteers, however, were with General Claiborne in the war zone. To these he refers in terms of warm praise.

ready been stated, being commissioned Brigadier-General of Volunteers in the United States service in March, 1813. On his staff were Captain Joseph P. Kennedy, Brigade Major; Lieutenant Alexander Calvit, Aide; and Dr. John Kerr, Surgeon.¹

The latter part of July, Brigadier-General Ferdinand Leigh Claiborne, commanding at Baton Rouge, was ordered by General Flournoy to take the whole army quickly to Fort Stoddert to defend the country in event of trouble, not only between the Mississippi Territory and the Creek Indians, but on the southern coast between the United States and Great Britain, with Spain for a sympathizer if not a declared ally of the latter.

Claiborne reached Mount Vernon on July 30, having mortgaged his lands to supply the soldiers with additional comforts. With the same high heart and love of country which had won him, when a youth of twenty, a lieutenancy in Wayne's great army on the far Northwest frontier, he was still serving the American government.

On the eastern frontier he found the inhabitants very much alarmed over the Indian invasion—a

¹ The same, probably, who became surgeon-general of Jackson's army during the defense of New Orleans. The family was then prominent in the Mississippi Territory and later in Louisiana, David Ker (sometimes spelled Kerr and pronounced Car), having been Judge of the Mississippi Territorial Supreme Court in 1802.

topic discussed everywhere. Many of the people had fled from their homes and were occupying rough, hastily built blockhouses all over Clarke County and in the forks of the Tombigbee and Alabama Rivers. After making a distribution of his troops as best to defend the frontier, Claiborne began the construction of Fort Madison, dispatching Colonel Carson with 200 troops to the fork, where wandering bands of Indians were reported to be daily committing depredations. Colonel Scott was sent to Old Fort St. Stephens with headquarters in a blockhouse built by the French and afterwards held by the Spaniards. "Major Thomas Hinds with his mounted Dragoons," says Pickett quoting from General Claiborne's manuscript papers, "was employed in scouring the country." The companies of Captains Jack and Middleton were sent to garrison a stockade east of the Alabama River, called Fort Mims, which was soon to become the scene of one of the most tragic events of the war.

Although Colonel Joseph Carson with the 1st Regiment of Mississippi Infantry, United States Volunteers, was now in the river country and General Ferdinand L. Claiborne had inspected the forts, the encounter of Burnt Corn Creek between the Creeks and the frontier soldiery of the Mississippi Territory filled the settlers everywhere in the

Tombigbee, Tensas, Alabama and Mobile regions with grave concern, causing them to keep more closely within the stockade, though some among them continued to believe that the long established peace between the two neighboring nations would prevent any real hostilities.

Though many of the families of the detached settlements were half-breeds, this distinction, if any value can be attached to it, availed them little so long as they affiliated with their white kinsmen. They stood more in dread of the war party than did the white settlers, since for them was reserved the severest punishment for refusing to "take the war talk," thereby declaring their opposition to the Red Sticks.

Throughout the frontier region bordering the Creek Nation, nearly all of these settlers of mixed blood dwelling along the rivers, endeavoring to avoid the fury of the war party, sought the stockades along with the whites, filling them in some communities to overflowing. About one mile from the Alabama River, two miles below the cut-off and one-fourth of a mile from the Tensas boat-yard, stood the residence of Samuel Mims, an old Indian countryman, and here a large number had gathered for mutual protection. According to old records, around a space covering nearly an acre, they built a strong stockade, for the most

part square. This, after the style of stockades built at Fort Madison and other places had a large eastern and western gate. The Mims home occupied the center and the other buildings were grouped about it. Among the buildings was one known as Patrick's Loom House, which, on account of its having been more extensively picketed, was invested with the dignity of a bastion. The fort well guarded was sufficiently strong to have resisted an attack with such equipment as the Indians were usually provided with for storming a fort.

That the reader may get a full view of the theater of the bloody drama about to be enacted in this region whose beauty vied with any in America, a summary of all stockades and forts (a number standing and others erected to provide posts for hostilities with the Creek Indians) is given from Halbert and Ball.¹

"1. Fort St. Stephens, established by the French, probably about 1714, held afterwards by the Spaniards, who made there a settlement about 1786, given up by the Spaniards to the Americans in 1799. . . . So far as the Creek Indians were concerned, this was considered an impregnable fortress. . . . It was on the west bank of the Tombigbee, on a high bluff, at the head of sloop navigation.

¹ History of the Creek War, by Halbert and Ball.

"2. Fort Stoddert, as established by United States troops in July, 1799, . . . with stockade and bastion. As this was for some years a government post, held by the United States troops, and became a port of entry where the Court of Admiralty was held, it was of course a strong point. In 1804 Captain Schuyler of New York was commander here, with eighty men, Edmund P. Gaines was Lieutenant, and Lieutenant Reuben Chamberlain was paymaster. At Fort Stoddert duties were exacted on imports and exports. Four miles west of Fort Stoddert was Mount Vernon.

"3. Passing down the river, a strong fort was located at Mobile called Fort Charlotte. Another was also constructed here, Fort Bowyer.

"4. Going now northward, on the east side of the Alabama, two miles below the 'cut off,' a quarter of a mile from the Tensas Boat Yard, was the ill-fated Fort Mims. This was built in the summer of 1813. . . . When the erection of this stockade was commenced is uncertain, perhaps in July, and, according to Pickett, its last block house was never finished.

"This might be called No. 1 of the stockades erected especially for protection against the Creeks but the former notation will be continued.

"5. Fort Pierce was a small stockade some two miles south-east of Fort Mims. It took its name from two brothers, William Pierce and John Pierce, who came from New England and made there their home in Spanish times. William Pierce was a weaver and John Pierce a teacher.

"6. Crossing the Alabama and coming into the new Clarke County, we reach Fort Glass, built some time in July at the home of Zachariah Glass by himself and his neighbors, Nah-hee, called a Tory Creek, an intelligent Indian, employed in the Creek war as a scout, assisting, it is said, in the building.

"7. Fort Madison was in the north-east corner of section one, township six, range three east of the St. Stephen's meridian, on the water-shed line, which was then the eastern boundary of Clarke County. It was north of Fort Glass only two hundred and twenty-five yards, and the two stockades constituted one locality, being the center of the quite large Fort Madison neighborhood. The first store in this region was about due east from Fort Madison, on the Alabama River, distant six miles, opened, probably, in 1812; and one of the first grist mills was built about the same time, perhaps about four miles north; and in 1813 the first cotton gin in the vicinity was erected some two miles north. This was one of the seven principal settlements in the then new Clarke County and the region west of the Alabama. As is evident from the mention of the store and the mill and the gin, and the plantations that were opened around these, it was an important locality for these settlers to hold.

"Fort Madison contained not quite an acre of ground, having been sixty yards square. A trench three feet in depth was dug around the outside and bodies of pine trees cut about fifteen feet

in length were placed perpendicularly in the trench side by side, making thus a wall of pine wood twelve feet in height. Port holes were cut at convenient distances so as to enable the inmates to look out, and in case of an attack to fire upon the besiegers. In about the same way all these stockades of 1813 were constructed. They were lighted at night by means of the abundant pitch pine placed upon scaffolds, covered with earth, erected for the purpose. Additional securities were added at Fort Madison and an improved method of lighting introduced. Within this enclosure, bearing the name of the President of the United States, were the tents and cabins of the settlers of that neighborhood, and after its erection, the date not certain, Fort Glass was occupied by the soldiers.

"8. Fort Sinquefield was about ten miles north of Fort Madison, on the western side of Bassett's Creek, a large stream of water for a creek, on section thirteen, township eight, range three east, a smaller stockade built very much in the same manner. It was about five miles south-east from the present town of Grove Hill, formerly called Macon, the county seat of Clarke County. This fort stood on a tableland or height of ground extending for a mile north and south. Eastward is a gentle slope which terminates finally in the Bassett's Creek Valley. Westward are deep valleys and narrow, between large high ridges of land. No actual hill is within miles of this locality, yet the ascent from the valleys to the top of

the ridges or table, might be called going up hill. The spring which supplied this stockade with water is south of west in one of the deep valleys, distant two hundred and seventy-five yards.

"Ninety feet distant from the once stockade ground, in a northwest direction, are some graves. A few rods eastward of the fort ground is supposed to be an old burial place, although here the traces of the graves were not distinct in 1879. One of the principal highways of Clarke County runs directly by this locality, but, as it has been for many years a family home, no traces of the stockade outlines can be found here which are still so distinct at Forts Glass and Madison.

"9. Fort White was a small stockade a short distance northeast of the present Grove Hill.

"10. Landrum's Fort was eleven miles west from Fort Sinquefield; on section eighteen, township eight, range two east.

"11. Mott's Fort was in the same neighborhood. These both were small.

"12. Going now to the Tombigbee River and northward, Fort Easley was on section ten or eleven, township eleven, range one west, at what is now called Wood's Bluff. This fort was named, as were nearly all others, from a prominent settler in the neighborhood, and the bluff took its name from Major Wood, an officer in the Burnt Corn expedition. This stockade was on a small plateau containing about three acres. On the side next to the river the bluff is almost a perpendicular wall, there is 'a bold spring of water

flowing from its side,' and the descent is quite abrupt from this plateau above and below the stockade ground, making this fort a naturally strong position.

"General Claiborne visited this stockade about the last of August, having received a report that it would be attacked by the Indians. It is possible that some of the Creeks started this report to call attention away from the real fort which they designed to attack, that Fort Mims, which was fifty miles south and twelve miles east from Fort Easley.

"13. Turner's Fort was some eight miles south and five west, in the west bend of the Tombigbee River, near the residence of Abner Turner. This fort was built of split pine logs doubled, and contained two or three blockhouses. It was held by the citizens of the neighborhood, thirteen men and some boys forming the garrison that expected to protect the women and children. Two or three miles distant, on the river, was a Choctaw reservation known as Turkey Town called by the Choctaws, 'Fakit Chipunta,' Little Turkeys. In this stockade were members of the Turner, Thornton, Pace, and other families, early settlers in what became the delightful West Bend neighborhood. Here for a time resided Tandy Walker, who is mentioned in the Gaines records, as 'a most experienced and daring backwoodsman,' but in the summer of 1813 he was connected with the affairs at Fort Madison.

"The inmates of the two forts, Turner's and

Easley's, held religious services in their fort life. At Fort Easley a camp-meeting was held, probably in August, which some from the other stockades attended. The 'love feast' on Sunday morning was held outside the fort, but guards were stationed to give warning if any attacking party of Indians appeared.

"14. Passing, now, down the river on the west side, five miles below Coffeerville, about a mile from the river, was Cato's Fort.

"15. Still further west, in Washington County, was Rankin's Fort, quite a large stockade, and the most western one of the River Group.

"16. McGrew's Fort was in the corner of section one, township seven, range one west, about three miles north of Fort St. Stephens, in Clarke County five miles north and eighteen west from Fort Madison. It is claimed that the area here enclosed with palisades was about two acres. Some of the posts were remaining in 1879, and around the fort locality was an old field. Here two brothers, William McGrew and John McGrew, British Royalists then, refugees, probably from the Atlantic coast, made an early settlement near the Tombigbee River. McGrew's Reserve, an old Spanish grant, is still a landmark in Clarke County. These brothers left the reputation of having been exemplary men, and of having become good Americans. How many families were in this fort is not known.

"17. Six miles south from Jackson, at Gullet's Bluff, was Fort Carney, on the line of travel to

Mount Vernon. This fort was built by Josiah Carney, who settled on the river in 1809.

"18. Three miles south of Fort Carney, near Oven Bluff, was Powell's Fort, where were about six families, including those of John McCaskey, James Powell, and John Powell.

"19. Lavier's Fort, written sometimes by mistake or misprint Rivier's, was built, so far as has been ascertained (the only authority is an aged colored man, Dick Embree), near the residence of Captain Lawson Lavier, who traded with the Choctaw Indians. It was built by himself and a few neighbors, but its locality is not known. Pickett names it, but no resident of Clarke County was found, in 1877, who knew anything of it.

"20. At Mount Vernon, to which as General Claiborne's headquarters we now come, and where was a United States arsenal, were two forts. An arsenal was maintained here until 1861, and since 1865 this has been held as a United States post, where a few officers and soldiers may always be found. Near the parade ground are some of those beautiful trees known as live oak, and the long-leaf pine growth extends a long distance northward. The landing place on the river known as Arsenal wharf or Fort Stoddert, four miles distant, the early United States 'port of entry' is distant from Mobile by the river channel forty-five miles, and five miles further north by the river brings one to the head of the Mobile River, the union of the Alabama and Tombigbee. The Mobile River, of the formation of which, judging

from the school maps of Guyot and others, many must be ignorant, is fifty miles in length. Mount Vernon is distant now from Mobile by railroad only twenty-nine miles. As a place supposed to be very secure the two forts there, in the summer of 1813, are said to have been 'packed.' How many people were in these different stockades at any one time is not certain. But after the alarm caused by the massacre at Fort Mims there were at Forts Madison and Glass more than one thousand citizens and soldiers. At Fort Carney there were about four hundred. Rankin's Fort contained five hundred and thirty. How many hundred were at St. Stephens and at Mount Vernon is not known.

"In these river settlements there were at that time, it has been already stated, about two thousand whites and two thousand blacks, taking for the basis of authority the United States census of 1810.

"Besides these twenty or twenty-one forts, so called, which were in the line of the river settlements proper, two forts, named Rogers' and Patton's were constructed in what is now Wayne County, Mississippi; Patton's Fort at Winchester and Rogers' Fort, six miles above. There was little use for these, however, and no real need, for the Creeks were not likely to cross the Tombigbee and go into the Choctaw territory. In fact, families of Clarke County instead of trusting themselves in the stockades and enduring the inconveniences of thus living, for even a few weeks,

crossed the Tombigbee and selected camping grounds far enough west to be, as they thought, out of danger. Among some such was the family of Mrs. Cathell, a widow with four sons and four daughters, having come into Clarke County from Georgia, in 1812. Two of her sons went as soldiers against the Indians. She dreaded to have them leave her, saying that she had lost two brothers in the Revolutionary War and she felt sure these sons would fall in the coming conflict. And they did fall with so many others at Fort Mims. Disliking fort life for herself, as she had experienced it in her girlhood in the War of the Revolution, she with the other members of her family and ten or twelve other families crossed the river and went into camps."

CHAPTER IX

MASSACRE AT FORT MIMS

IN spite of conflicting opinions as to the spirit of the Creeks, the Burnt Corn expedition had its weight, and preparations for war in the Mississippi Territory went steadily on. Governor Holmes had greatly strengthened the military defenses of the Territory and the numerous stockades were daily inspected by General Claiborne, commanding at Mount Vernon. He visited Fort Mims in person on August 7th and advised the utmost caution on the part of Major Beasley, who, notwithstanding this counsel, continued to feel optimistic, sharing Colonel Hawkins' idea that there was no danger. How great was his sense of security and how profound his contempt for the possible source of trouble are evident in his reply to the gallant and cautious half-breed scout, Jim Cornells, who after reconnoitering the Fort's outposts for several miles along the river, returned to report that a band of Indians was approaching, that these were only "a gang of red cattle," to be looked upon with as little apprehension. "Red

cattle" was an epithet that the white settlers contemptuously applied to the Creeks.

Both Pickett and Halbert describe Fort Mims, erected during the summer of 1813, as a military post under lax discipline, at the moment utterly unprepared for the sudden attack upon it which had been planned by the Creeks with the coolest deliberation. Fired no less with Tecumseh's counsel than with the thought of revenge at the memory of the affair on Burnt Corn Creek, they had strengthened their confederacy, now making no secret of having danced the significant war-dance. They had been well supplied with arms and ammunition by the Spaniards at Pensacola, who to judge from the attendant circumstances and the swiftness of Governor Manrique's congratulations sent to William Weatherford—now the recognized leader of the war party—had assisted them in planning the attack on the fort.

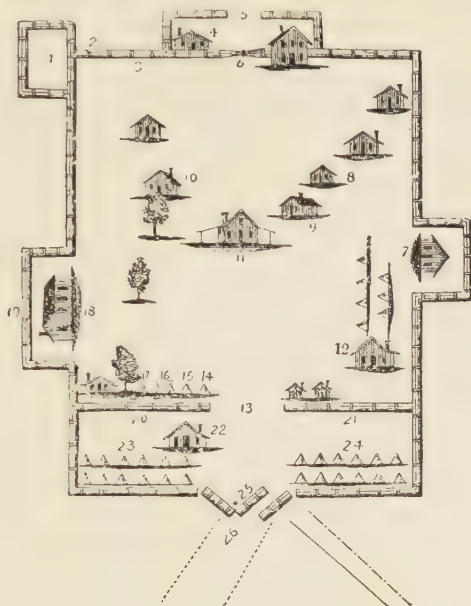
Major Daniel Beasley, in command of the garrison, has been presented by Halbert and others as wholly unfit temperamentally and on account of his free use of intoxicating liquors for such a responsible position. Other historians have sought to exonerate him. Certainly he did not lack physical courage. That he shared largely in the doubt manifested in some quarters of any serious hostility on the part of the Indians such

as to lead to actual war is evident. It is clear, too, that he regarded the battle of Burnt Corn as much ado about nothing.

Though making light of the situation, still the whites in the main kept within the fortresses erected for their safety. It is said, however, that at Fort Mims they were permitted to stroll far beyond the gates and except for the anxiety shown by General Claiborne in his message of August 29th to Major Beasley, the people as a whole seemed lulled into an unaccountable sense of security, a condition that overtakes men sometimes when in imminent danger. At Fort Mims, to which a supply of whisky had been brought a few days previous, "some of the inmates," writes Pickett, "had become inactive and free from alarm and had abandoned themselves to fun and frolic." All historians agree that a holiday spirit prevailed.

Led by the sphinx-like Weatherford—a descendant of the beautiful Princess Sehoj and the famous Alexander McGillivray—and his trusted confederates Peter McQueen and the Prophet Francis, the Indians decided to make the attack at noon in retaliation for the assault of the whites at Burnt Corn, which had also been fixed at that hour. The horrible massacre took place on August 30th. The day has been de-

DRAWING OF FORT MIMS,
Found among Gen. Claiborne's manuscript papers.



REFERENCES.

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| 1 Block House. | 14 Ensign Chambliss' Tent. |
| 2 Pickets cut away by the Indians. | 15 Ensign Gibbs'. |
| 3 Guard's Station. | 16 Randon's. |
| 4 Guard House. | 17 Captain Middleton's. |
| 5 Western Gate, but not up. | 18 Captain Jack's Station. |
| 6 This Gate was shut, but a hole was cut through by the Indians. | 19 Port-holes taken by Indians. |
| 7 Captain Bailey's Station. | 20 21 Port-holes taken by Indians. |
| 8 Steadham's House. | 22 Major Beasley's Cabin. |
| 9 Mrs. Dyer's House. | 23 Captain Jack's Company. |
| 10 Kitchen. | 24 Captain Middleton's Company. |
| 11 Mims' House. | 25 Where Major Beasley fell. |
| 12 Randon's House. | 26 Eastern Gate, where the Indians entered. |
| 13 Old Gate-way—open. | |

scribed as beautiful and placid, with golden shafts of summer sunlight burnishing forest, field and water, though Pickett has said that the sun itself veiled its face at times to shut out the awful deed. The usual drum-beat, which had been instituted as a call for twelve o'clock dinner, had sounded, falling with a double significance on the ears of the thousand grim warriors who in the coverts of the forest awaited this as the signal for attack. Just as in so many other pathetic instances, the occupants of the Fort were engaged in feasting and dancing, totally unconscious of danger. Silently the painted and befeathered warriors of Weatherford stole from the deep woods and tall cane-brake and stealthily approached the fortifications. In a moment the wild discordant yells of the savages silenced the sounds of laughter and light revelry. The utmost confusion prevailed throughout the Fort.

Original records of General F. L. Claiborne, used by Pickett, say in substance that the sand had washed against the eastern gate of the Fort which was swinging wide open on the day of the massacre. As Weatherford and his warriors sped swiftly towards the gate, Major Beasley ran forward and vainly tried to close it. The Indians struck him fiercely with their clubs and tomahawks and supposing him dead rushed over

his body into the Fort. In a dying condition the stricken officer crawled behind the gate, where he shortly expired. While in the throes of death, all report that he, to the last, tried to rally his men, persistently calling on them to save the Fort. Whatever may have been his offense in the neglect of duty, that he died bravely none will dispute.

Though scattered here and there in the wildest disorder and confusion, the brave defenders of the Fort snatched their guns and knives and began a terrific battle with the foe. Leading and cheering them was none other than the heroic Captain Dixon Bailey, already referred to for his bravery at Burnt Corn, supported now by his brothers, James and Daniel. Nor did he quail before the gaze of the haughty Weatherford—"Red Eagle," known as the bravest warrior of the Muscogee tribe. With one blow of his gunstock he struck down one of the gaudily arrayed prophets who was frantically leading an assault. Four more, disproving the assertion that their sacred bodies could not be harmed, succumbed to American bullets. Striving by Captain Bailey's side, until death claimed both, were the brave Captains Jack and Middleton, commanding companies of the Mississippi Volunteers, all of whom perished in the first hours

of resistance. General Claiborne had sent these two companies, drawn from the best population of the Mississippi Territory, to help guard the Fort in the event of trouble. The loss of these gallant men was serious both to the army and to the communities from which they had volunteered. They had been among the most active in resisting the Indians and their heroic efforts at one time had checked, for a few moments, the work of the savages. But confusion prevailed everywhere and the lack of order served to increase the panic. The author of "In Clarke and Its Surroundings," in a vivid description of the scene, writes:

"The officers bravely endeavored to drive the Indians from the gateway but bravery was now of no avail. Officers and men fell in vain attempts to counteract the results of a want of vigilance in the past. Help or hope there was none and soldiers, women, children, Spaniards, friendly Indians fell together in heaps of mangled bodies, the dying and the dead, scalped, mutilated, bloody, to be consumed ere long by fire or to become food for hungry dogs and buzzards. In vain the young men, no longer dancing with the girls, and also the aged men and the boys, fought the unrelenting savages with desperate fury. In vain did the brave Captain Bailey, left as the commanding officer and who lived through all the carnage, animate the inmates to a resolute

resistance. In vain did the women load the guns, bring water from the well and do all that it was possible to do in sustaining the courage of the men."

The massacre had lasted between two and three hours when there was a slight cessation of hostilities, to be immediately renewed, some historians assert, when the Indians had been reinforced under the command of Weatherford.¹ It was during this renewal of the attack that one of the main buildings of the Fort was set ablaze by the fire-laden arrows from the bow of the fierce Shawnee chieftain, Seekaboo. The cunning device never proved more effective and the Fort with the exception of a blockhouse and a few pickets soon went up in flames.

The sickening details of the massacre that have left a tragic shadow on the pages of our early history will not be dwelt on. In the afternoon of the ill-fated August 30th, the ghastly tragedy of Fort Mims was concluded. "Not even in the Sepoy Rebellion," says one historian, "did human eyes behold a more revolting spectacle." Surpassing in frenzied fierceness the ravage of Wyoming Valley, and similar in many respects to the massacre of Fort Rosalie at Natchez nearly

¹ Charles Weatherford always denied that his grandfather, Red Eagle, led the Indians in this second assault on Fort Mims.



From an original painting by Chappel

Massacre at Fort Mims, 1813.

a hundred years previous when the French were practically exterminated, it takes rank as one of the most inhuman pieces of butchery ever perpetrated in the history of the American Indian. The deed had been committed so suddenly and with such awful consequences that few could account for it, especially in view of the frequent mixture of blood between the two races and the long peace that had been maintained. As brutal as the nature of the Creeks was known to be, few had been of the opinion that they were still as savage as this deed proved. Loyola's Jesuits had for nearly a century struggled to teach them Divine law, but, though the most sincere lovers of freedom—with a touch it is true that partook largely of that of the lion's impulse toward mastery of the forest—they still were, except in a few instances, unresponsive to lasting Christian instruction.

However, we can realize how strong must have been the national spirit of the Muscogee. Though bound to the white race by the linking of proud names in Muscogee, European and American genealogy, in the final reckoning McGillivray, Bailey, Cornells, McGirth, Tunstall, Tait, Durant, Moniac, Smith, McQueen, Fisher and many more of American significance, were as names written in sand in comparison with names and faiths

sacred since the Great Spirit had commanded the Muscogee to come out of the bosom of the Nanih Waiya—names and faiths which must now be defended at every cost and sacrifice.

As an instance of the irony of fate, while the Spaniards at Pensacola were urging the Creeks to exterminate the Americans, members of their own race and creed at Fort Mims, in a suppliant attitude and in the very act of making the sign of the cross, were mercilessly tomahawked by the brutal hands their government was aiding.

There has been much controversy relative to the number of Indians engaged in the massacre. Pickett and some others place the strength of the attacking party at one thousand. Many local authorities, and some historians have, also, disputed about the number of inhabitants slain. Halbert, who follows Pickett in most statements, fixes the number of whites killed during the massacre, including men, women and children, at five hundred. A number having fled at the outset, it is safe to say that near these figures would be found the truth. Pickett's list,¹ taken from

¹ Pickett's list of those who escaped from Fort Mims is as follows: Mrs. McGirth and her daughters, a friendly Indian named Socca, Hester a negro woman, Samuel Smith of mixed blood, Lieutenant W: R. Chambliss, Dr. Thomas G. Holmes, Lieutenant Peter Randon, Sergeant Matthews, Josiah Fletcher, Martin Rigdon, Joseph Perry, Jesse Steadham, Edward Steadham, John Hoven, ——— Jones, and ——— Maurice. This last name can now be corrected from a newspaper record. A. J.

General Claiborne's papers recording those who escaped, together with an additional one made later, is given in a note for the benefit of those

Morris died at Heflin, Alabama, April 5, 1891, nearly one hundred years of age. He is supposed to have been the last survivor of the inmates of Fort Mims. Five are mentioned in the *Birmingham Age Herald*, by a special correspondent, L. E. M., as escaping through the pickets together. These were Martin Rigdon, Samuel Smith, Joseph Perry, Jesse Steadham, and A. J. Morris, and all these, it is said, went to Mount Vernon, after wandering several days. These names are all in Pickett's list. "To these," says Halbert, "may be added, according to Dr. Clanton, Stubblefield, Cook, Montjoy, Aaron Bradley and Elemuel Bradford. Dr. Clanton's authority was Samuel Smith. Pickett's informers were Dr. T. G. Holmes, Jesse Steadham and Peter Randon. On the authority of Judge Meek may be added the name of James Bealle, and on the authority of Rev. J. G. Jones of Hazlehurst, Mississippi, the name of private Daniels of Jefferson County, Mississippi. There have already been given on good authority the additional names of Mrs. Mims, David Mims, Alexander Mims and Joseph Mims; also of Mrs. Susan Hatterway, Elizabeth Randon, and Lizzie the colored girl. So that, in addition to Pickett's fifteen, without counting the McGirth family of seven or eight, we have the names of fourteen others, making in all some thirty-six survivors out of five hundred and fifty-three. There were probably a few others whose names are yet unknown, and some of the hundred colored people were probably taken away by the Indians, of whom there would remain no trace. About fifty seems to be a fair estimate of those who survived the horrors of that day and night.

"The escape of Lieutenant Chambliss," continues Halbert, "as given by Pickett, was remarkable. After passing out from the stockade and the Indians around it, he at length took refuge in a log-heap. To this in the night, some Indians set fire and when it seemed that he could no longer endure the smoke and the heat something called the Indians away and he escaped.

"Captain Dixon Bailey, although severely wounded, left the Fort with others, taking with him his little child, but he never reached a human habitation. Judge Meek states that some time after there was found in the swamp a gun having the name, Dixon Bailey, cut in the stock, and by it were the bones of a man and a child. Pickett states that a negro carried a child of Dixon Bailey's in the effort to escape and that becoming bewildered in his excitement he ran back among the Indians who immediately killed the trembling boy as he was calling on his father to save his life."

who, like the patient, minutiae-loving, fact-gleaner, Halbert, take pride in recounting the smallest details.

In this gruesome picture of savage warfare, from his very entrance into the Fort to the last fiendish blow, only one single kindly act has been cited by local historians to lighten the dark tale of the red man's deeds. This was the protection, already referred to, given by the valiant young chieftain, Jim Boy, to Mrs. McGirth and her family, who had found and nourished him when a forsaken and starving child. With the exception of this act of sincere gratitude no other deed, unless we accept as authentic the instance of the protection afforded Mrs. Susan Hatterway and two children by Dog Warrior, indicates that there was any intention on the part of the savages to spare the helpless women and children of the Fort, though Weatherford, it is said, urged that they be unmolested.

An incident preserved of the negro race makes a strong appeal: this being the instance of the negro Hester's devotion to the white race and her heroic effort, though severely wounded, to inform General Claiborne of the calamity that was overtaking the Fort. In comparison with the savage and inhuman behavior of the Indians, the conduct of the slave may be

pointed to as indicative of racial development. Association with the white race had effected an improvement and stride upwards. Even here on the outskirts of civilization, where the white man was lax in many rules that were with common consent held to be right for him, we find the negro slaves, as a whole, reflecting in some degree his best instincts and virtues, while the red race of America was at all times slow to receive civilization of any nature.

CHAPTER X

WILLIAM WEATHERFORD, COMMANDER OF THE
CREEK ARMY

WILLIAM WEATHERFORD, commonly known among his associates as "Billy" Weatherford, is thought by local historians to have joined the war party about August 25th, just five days prior to the massacre at Fort Mims. While it appears preposterous to think that an opponent of a movement that had been fomenting for months, even years, should at the last moment become its leader, we give Halbert's views on account of Weatherford's prominence.

In speaking of a correspondence between General Flournoy and General Claiborne, dated August 25, 1813, he says:

"Some time between the dates of these two letters, it is evident that Weatherford joined the war party, for before August closed we find him at Fort Mims; General Woodward places it in 1813, but does not name the month. And it may be here observed that Tecumseh seems to have had no influence over Weatherford. Woodward

says that Sam Moniac and Weatherford, returning from a trip into the Mississippi Territory, where they had been 'trading in beef cattle,' found several chiefs assembled—it is said on Tallawassee Creek, a mile and a half from the Alabama River—and taking the 'black drink.'

"These chiefs told Weatherford and Moniac that they must join them or be put to death. The following are Woodward's own words: 'Moniac boldly refused and mounted his horse. Josiah Francis, his brother-in-law, seized his bridle. Moniac snatched a war club from his hand, gave him a severe blow and put out, with a shower of rifle bullets following him. Weatherford consented to remain. He told them that he disapproved their course, and that it would be their ruin, but that they were his people, he was raised with them, and he would share their fate. General Woodward names among these chiefs Hopie Tustanuggee, or Far Off Warrior, a Tuskegee, their eldest or principal chief, 'the one' says Woodward 'looked upon as the general,' who was killed at Fort Mims; Peter McQueen; Jim Boy or High Head Jim; Josiah Francis or Hillis Hadjo, 'the new made prophet,' probably the same who is called Joseph by General Wilkinson; Seekaboo, the Shawnee prophet; and several others. He says that Weatherford offered some advice to these chiefs, but they declined to follow his suggestions. The reasons which Weatherford assigned for joining the war party, as detailed at some length by Woodward, are very creditable

to Weatherford's humanity. He thought he would thus be the means of preventing not a little bloodshed."

In connection with Weatherford's attack on Fort Mims the following letter from his grandson, Charles Weatherford of Mt. Pleasant, Alabama, dated October 7, 1890, to Mr. T. H. Ball will prove interesting:¹

"SIR—Your letter of the 2d inst. came to hand yesterday. Sir, your subject has become stale. The name of Billy Weatherford is almost forgotten, superseded by the names of such men as Lee, Jackson and Grant. With the death of my father, Charles Weatherford, Sr., who is about ninety-five years old, the name of Weatherford will become commonplace. My father is the oldest and only living child of the notorious, and so called bloody-handed, Billy Weatherford. And I, sir, am the only living child of Charles Weatherford, Sr. Now, sir, you know who and what I am.

"My grandfather, Billy Weatherford, died in 1826.

"I was born in 1834, therefore what I have to say will only be hearsay and from many lips, some prejudiced and some partial.

"According to the most authentic information, Weatherford did not desire the massacre at Fort

¹ Claiborne Collection, Mississippi Department of Archives and History.

Mims. About the middle of the afternoon of that sadly memorable day Weatherford met his half brother, David Tate, about twelve miles above Fort Mims, and told him of the massacre and spoke of it with much regret. He told Tate that he tried to prevent it; but under the excitement his warriors threatened his life if he interfered. Tate did not belong to the hostile party.

“Now as to Weatherford’s being mounted at the time the engagement began, circumstances prove that he was not. I had an aunt who was a refugee in Fort Mims. I have often heard her say that she saw Billy Weatherford as he came in the gate at full run, at the head of his warriors, jump a pile of logs almost as high as his head. (Weatherford stood six feet two inches.) She said, as he sprang over the logs he saw Captain Dixon Bailey who was a bitter enemy, to whom he shouted, ‘Dixon Bailey, to-day one or both of us must die.’ So I judge by this that he was not mounted at the time of the engagement. But in the evening (afternoon) of that day, when he met Tate, Weatherford was mounted on the veritable black horse. I believe it is a recognized fact that all warriors of note ride either a milk-white or raven black steed. Now, sir, I, being a man of peace, and altogether unlike my grand sire, ride an old sorrel mare.

“The aunt of whom I have spoken as being a refugee, in Fort Mims at the time of the massacre was Mrs. Susan Hatterway (nee Stiggins) who hated Billy Weatherford with a thorough hatred.

My aunt's husband was killed early in the fight. She had no children. And when she saw that the fort would be reduced to ashes she took hold of a little white girl, Elizabeth Randon, with one hand, and a negro girl named Lizzie, with the other, and said to them, 'Let us go out and be killed together.' But to her surprise she saw one of the busy and bloody warriors beckon her to him. On approaching she recognized him. It was Iffa Tustunnaga, meaning Dog Warrior. He took her prisoner with the two children. He took them to Pensacola, and gave them over to some of their friends, where they remained until the war closed, when they returned to their homes in Alabama. Soon after the close of the war my aunt married Absalom Sizemore. She died near Mount Pleasant in 1865.

"When Elizabeth Randon grew to womanhood she married Algier Newman, and lived many years on the Alabama River just below Fort Claiborne in Monroe County. Excuse me for the digression.

"I will get back to my subject by saying that Lucy Cornells' story must have been merely to embellish the story. But it would not have surprised me if he had done so. All great warriors do such things.

"I believe the name has always been spelled Cornells.

"Billy Weatherford was married three times, twice under the Indian law. His first wife, my grandmother, was Mary Moniac, originally

spelled McNac. She died in 1804 at Point Thloly, which is in Lowndes County. His second wife was Sapoth Thlanie. I never heard where or when she died. His third and last wife was Mary Stiggins. They were married under the white law in 1817. She died near Mount Pleasant, Monroe County, 1832.

"I had an anecdote told me once by the mother of the late Colonel William Boyles, of Mobile, which is the only one that I have never seen in print. Mrs. Boyles was a widow and lived near Billy Weatherford in Monroe County. She kept what was called at that time a wayside tavern. Weatherford, in going to and from his plantation, passed right by her door. They were warm friends and she frequently invited him to eat a meal with her. On this particular day she invited him to eat dinner. Just before the meal was ready four strangers rode up and asked for dinner. All were soon seated at table, and discussion commenced, in the course of which the strangers wanted to know where that bloody-handed savage, Billy Weatherford, lived. Mrs. Boyles said Weatherford's eyes sparkled. She shook her head at him to say nothing. The talk went on. Three of the strangers expressed a wish to meet Weatherford, assuring Mrs. Boyles they would kill the red-skin, bloody-handed savage on sight. (Weatherford was fair, with light brown hair and mild black eyes.) Dinner being over, the gentlemen walked out on the gallery. To the surprise of the strangers, the

man with whom they had sat at table stepped into the midst of the crowd and said: 'Some of you gentlemen expressed a wish while at table to meet Billy Weatherford. Gentlemen, I am Billy Weatherford, at your service!' But Mrs. Boyles said she never saw men more frightened than were the three belligerently disposed gentlemen. Not one of the trio was entitled to a raven black or a milk white steed. They quailed under the glance of the Red Eagle's eye. The fourth gentleman, who had said but little, stepped forward and shook hands with Weatherford, and introduced himself as Colonel David Panthon."

The following story concerning William Weatherford signed H. S. Halbert on file among the Claiborne Papers in the custody of the Mississippi State Historical Department will prove interesting, since so little has been preserved of the picturesque commander of the Creek forces.

"A few years before the Creek War of 1813, William Weatherford, a celebrated half-breed Creek Indian and descendant of the McLauchlan Clan, established himself on a plantation on the Alabama River, in what is now Lowndes County, Alabama. Here he dispensed a profuse hospitality, and his home became the resort of the dissipated young Creek warriors, over whom Weatherford exercised an unbounded influence. As the plantation of Weatherford lay upon a route leading through the Creek nation to Mobile,

travelers going in that direction, often claimed the hospitality of his mansion. However much Weatherford may have embittered the whites against him in after years as the leader of the Creeks in their disastrous war, he was a man possessing many noble traits of character. In early life, wild, reckless and dissipated, he was, nevertheless, ever of an honorable and generous nature and extremely hospitable. Being a half-breed planter, he adhered to many of the customs of the whites, always dressing in their costume.

“Whilst Weatherford was living at the above-mentioned plantation, one summer evening, a white traveler stopped before his door, and claimed the hospitalities of the day. The traveler was a notorious character from Georgia, known among his acquaintances as Wild Bill Thurman. He was a desperate gambler and horse-racer, addicted to rude sports and practical jokes, which gave him a notoriety far and near, but withal possessing much native goodness of heart.

“A day or so before arriving at Weatherford’s house, Thurman was seized with a whim to have some sport out of the Indian chief, though in what manner he should have the sport, he left to circumstances. He accordingly sold his horse and bought a miserable broken-down hack, that could with difficulty drag one foot after the other, and in this plight, presented himself at the house of the Creek warrior. Weatherford, meanwhile, soon found out from other guests who were

present, what kind of character Thurman was, and the object he had in view, and resolved to checkmate him.

“As the guests were sitting in the bar-room after partaking of a bountiful supper, Weatherford sent for his negro fiddler to entertain the company. Whilst the fiddler was discoursing his liveliest music, and the enjoyment of all was at its height, Weatherford suddenly drew a pistol and ordered Thurman to dance. Thurman, astonished but taking in the situation at a glance, and knowing that remonstrance was useless, went to work with heel and toe. For a long time he danced, the pistol of Weatherford steadily cocked upon him, and the assembled guests looking on. He began to grow weary, streams of perspiration flowed from his face, but still on he danced for dear life, the deadly pistol ever threatening him. Finally Weatherford relented; told him that would do, that he might now rest, and they would take a drink together. To this Thurman gladly assented. Whilst the two were refreshing the inner man Thurman all at once, with the speed of lightning jerked up the pistol which Weatherford had laid aside, and levelled it full upon the breast of the chief. ‘Now, Bill Weatherford,’ said he, ‘it is your time to dance. Now you dance until I tell you to stop, or I will drive a ball through you instantly.’ Turning then to the negro fiddler, he told him if he valued his life, to play that fiddle until he was told to stop. Weatherford, brave as he was, saw at once that the tables

were turned upon him, and knowing that Thurman possessed a nature as reckless as his own, he submitted with the best grace possible. For nearly an hour the chief was compelled to play the same rôle which he had enforced on Thurman. No one, white man or Indian, dared interfere, as they knew Thurman too well.

“At last, Thurman, satisfied with his revenge, lowered his weapon, told Weatherford that he had danced enough, and that both were now even. Weatherford accepted the situation; and after some general conversation, all parties retired for the night. However, before retiring, Weatherford secretly ordered a party of Indians to take Thurman’s horse out into the woods and kill him; which was done forthwith.

“Weatherford arose the next morning by no means satisfied with the night’s experience. As he excelled in all the athletic sports of his people, he hoped yet to get the upper hand of Thurman. Accordingly, after breakfast, the chief challenged Thurman to a wrestling match, which the latter accepted. They wrestled several times, but in every encounter, Weatherford was worsted and was mortified at the result. He next challenged Thurman to a boxing match, or rather to a rough fist fight. The agreement was that no one was to interfere, until one or the other cried out, ‘enough.’ After a long and violent struggle, Weatherford at last had to yield to the superior prowess of the white man. Both parties then shook hands, and pledged a mutual friendship.

Weatherford began to conceive a strange liking for his antagonist. Although the idol of the Creek warriors, and the best ball-player in the nation, he felt no chagrin at his defeat, but regarded his antagonist with favor and admiration. Thurman spent several days with Weatherford, who treated him with marked kindness, and entertained him with all the sports and amusements peculiar to the Indians.

"At last, one morning, Thurman expressing a desire to resume his journey, Weatherford sent a servant to bring the finest horse out of his stable, which, equipped with elegant bridle and saddle, he presented to his astonished guest, at the same time handing over to him a hundred dollars in silver. 'Here, Thurman,' said he, 'take this horse, and never again ride such a horse as the one you rode here, and which I had killed for humanity's sake, but always ride a horse that is fit for a gentleman to ride. And whenever you pass along this way, be sure and come to see me, and make my house your home.' Thurman was forced to yield to the generosity of the chief. The two, with many expressions of good will, then separated devoted friends. They often met afterwards, and the friendship thus strangely formed, lasted during all of Weatherford's eventful career until his death in 1826.

"The above story illustrating the early life of William Weatherford, we received from an aged citizen of Alabama, a soldier of the War of 1812, who vouches for its authenticity."

Another story preserved by Halbert runs as follows, though he later, as has been stated, in his history of the Creek War asserted with emphasis that Weatherford never after the massacre of Fort Mims appeared in any battle except that of the Holy Ground:

“As is well known, at the battle of Caleebe, Weatherford made a furious night assault upon Floyd’s army. In the confusion incident to the attack Floyd was heard with a loud voice encouraging his troops. ‘Cheer up, boys, we will give them hell when daylight comes.’ Instantly from the ranks of the Creeks came back the voice of Weatherford in reply. ‘Yes, d—n you, and we will give *you* hell *before* daylight comes.’ And well did Weatherford make good his retort, killing and wounding over one hundred of Floyd’s men before the break of day, and displaying in every respect, a generalship equal to that of the American commander.”

As no further personal biography of this famous Indian chief will appear in this volume, it will prove interesting to some to know that after the war Weatherford settled in Monroe County, Alabama, where he became a permanent citizen. Notwithstanding the wild and tragic acts of his early life, local reports agree in stating that after the war Weatherford lived a quiet and industrious life and died a peaceable citizen.

CHAPTER XI

GENERAL CLAIBORNE IS HEARTENED BY THE ARRIVAL OF GENERAL ANDREW JACKSON AND THE TENNESSEE TROOPS; JACKSON TAKES CHARGE OF THE NORTHERN DISTRICT

THE news of the horrible massacre at Fort Mims was borne over the country as fast as horse and rider could travel and aroused the hot indignation not only of the people of Mississippi Territory but that of many Americans in all sections of the country. Though one prominent New York paper carried the news of the massacre as but an item, people everywhere were anxious for the safety of the white race in this far Southern section.

The Southern States especially denounced the atrocity, for Virginia, North and South Carolina and Georgia had sent many representatives to the beautiful and fertile Mississippi country. Other States, from Connecticut and Maine down to Kentucky, had also furnished numerous names to the list of immigrants who had been constantly settling in the Territory since colonial occupancy.

When the news of the massacre was verified, vigilance committees were formed throughout the Mississippi Territory and the new State of Louisiana, the name of Harmon Blennerhassett, the unhappy dupe and confederate of Aaron Burr, appearing on the one formed at Port Gibson, Claiborne County, Mississippi, where the unfortunate family had made a hiding-place for itself, calling the retreat "La Cache."

It was by the talented Mississippian, George Strother Gaines, who displayed unusual leadership in helping to enlist the Choctaws' aid in the American cause, that General Andrew Jackson was first apprised of the dreadful catastrophe of Fort Mims.¹ The news, once circulated, citizens armed themselves throughout the lower southern states and the brave Tennesseans, remembering their own frontier experiences with the Indians, determined to assist the young Mississippi Territory in her hour of need. The gallant force that came early to her defense contained such spirits as Sam Houston and Davy Crockett.

Communication with the Governors of the adjoining States was opened up by Governor Holmes, who lost no time in strengthening the military defenses of the Territory and putting it

¹ Gaines was a descendant of the Strother family of Virginia, the genealogy of which has been so carefully compiled by the late Dr. T. M. Owen, Alabama's gifted historian.

on a war footing. His messages and orders abound in patriotic utterances, such as "Patriotism, humanity, every motive of self-preservation and every honorable feeling that binds man to man demands our utmost exertion."

The massacre at Fort Mims filled no hearts, perhaps, with more sorrow and indignation than those of General Ferdinand L. Claiborne and his Mississippi Volunteers. The troops of the detachment dispatched with all haste to the scene were horror-stricken at the sight that met their eyes, and on beholding the butchered bodies of their friends and relatives "breathed out vengeance," says an eye witness, upon the perpetrators of the appalling deed.

The thoughtful and gallant Claiborne, though he was severely criticized by the thoughtless, had left nothing unprovided for in the protection of the frontier, which would have been absolute had his instructions been carried out. He had been everywhere on the Territorial boundary as far as the Choctaw line, sometimes riding seventy miles a day, often even being compelled to take the initiative, on account of General Flournoy's policy of restriction. But after the dreadful disaster of Fort Mims, Claiborne began to be more self-assertive and aggressive. He determined at any cost to protect the Mississippi Territory from

an invasion by the ferocious and merciless Creeks. Always counseling the greatest care on the part of the forces garrisoning the various forts, he now began active operations against the Creek war party along the lines of the usual mode of defense in times of Indian invasion: that is, the erection of a chain of forts protected by troops. In this instance the garrisons were larger than those used by any other military commanders in times of Indian invasion.

A favorite with the Mississippi militia, Claiborne retained the confidence of the troops before and after they had entered the service, even under the worst possible conditions.

An instance of his strong influence over his men is shown at the time when he had determined to lead his regiment into the Indian country and attack the capital city of Holy Ground. Though the terms of his Volunteers had expired and they were barefooted, hungry and half clothed, with their crops at home ungathered and the low price of cotton making it certain that their families would suffer for the necessities of life, he called them back into service and led them to victory in one of the most decisive battles that was fought for the safety of the Territory.¹ It is a fact worthy of record here that throughout

¹ The battle of the Holy Ground, Dec. 23, 1813.

the war not a shadow of disloyalty nor a trace of mutiny can be found in their service with Claiborne or later with Jackson.

Though always maintaining friendly relations with his superiors there were times when the commander of the Mississippi Volunteers was not at all in accord with Flournoy in his views on the Creek situation. The attitude of General Flournoy at this time would have chilled the soldierly ardor of any commander less brave than Claiborne. For while a man of great ability and worth in many respects, he had more than once interfered with and thwarted a number of brilliant exploits planned by General Claiborne early after the fall of Fort Mims, exploits that perhaps would have summarily put an end to the Creek hostilities as they related directly to the frontiers of the Mississippi Territory. Claiborne, knowing how imminent was the danger to the frontier settlements from the Indians, was determined to protect not only Mobile, but the entire Southern section. To all his appeals for immediate action against the destroyers of the garrison at Fort Mims, with his troops writhing under inaction and nursing in implacable mood their grievance against the Indians for the brutal massacre, with the war already established and the certainty of Great Britain's and Spain's assistance in arm-

ing the Creeks, he had received the following meticulous and tantalizing reply from the commander at Mobile:

“I do not wish you to engage in any rash enterprise. You must act on the defensive.” Compare such a discreet and cautious spirit with the martial one that called forth such fervid utterances as “Seize Pensacola and you disarm the Indians. It is the real heart of the Creek Confederacy”; “At all hazards, I wish you would enter the Creek Nation”; “I would advise a stroke at the root of all present distress—Pensacola.” Such confidence not only reveals the military ardor of the Mississippi commander, but conclusively proves that he had a clear understanding of the situation. Being denied the expeditions planned for the use of combined forces, the Mississippi troops in squads of 100 and less, and sometimes single-handed and alone, under this brave, discerning officer met the Indians after the massacre of August 30th, throughout the months of September, October, November and December and overwhelmed them in every instance. Placed in the vicinity of Mobile to guard that place against an attack by the British, Claiborne was, also, keenly alive to the danger along the entire frontier. Dealing, however, with a superior who was evidently not in touch with the situation, his

position was a trying one. Knowing the temper of the Mississippi Volunteers, he feared nothing from the Indians if given the opportunity of quelling them. As the days passed in his correspondence with General Flournoy he evinces a confident, aggressive generalship, while the latter continued to be irresolute and vacillating in his policy of handling the Creeks. Though he greatly doubted Claiborne's wisdom in his interpretation of the Creek situation his relations with him personally remained the friendliest, and his high regard for him as a soldier was at all times evident.

It was to General Claiborne more than to any other holding high rank in the army that Gaines and McKee looked for assistance in arranging the Choctaw alliance and in securing the active participation of Pushmataha in the war. It is thought by many local historians that had this renowned chieftain joined the war party the people of the Mississippi Territory even with the assistance of Jackson could not in all probability have withstood a disastrous Creek invasion. The wisdom and judgment Governor Holmes displayed during the alliance with the Choctaws are also very apparent, and much credit is due this able official for the attitude of the Indians to the north of the Territory.

With the Choctaws and Chickasaws friendly and General Claiborne now checking the advance of the Creek army Governor Holmes felt that the safety of the people along the frontier was in a large measure assured. His messages and orders reflect his relieved state of mind.

If Claiborne had proved an obstacle to the invading foe, no less active and vigilant was Colonel Joseph Carson, whose volunteer forces were eventually to lead a fierce charge against Weatherford's warriors.¹ Both of these brave Mississippi commanders, with the help of the fearless battalion of dragoons under Major Thomas Hinds, were fast driving the Indians from the frontier when General Jackson began active operations against them in the Northern District.

In addition to the message of Gaines, later communications from the Mississippi Territory had brought further news of the massacre at Fort

¹ Colonel Joseph Carson commanding on the eastern borders of the Mississippi Territory was one of the prominent men of the later Territorial period. He married a daughter of Abner Green of Adams County and consequently had influential connections in the Natchez District. He was commissioned as an attorney-at-law in 1807; was a member of the Territorial Council from 1809 to 1817; was attorney-general of the eastern district for many years, and a militia officer, acting in 1813 as colonel of the 1st Mississippi Regiment, United States Volunteers, on duty in the Alabama region, forcing the evacuation of the Spanish post on the Perdido River, April 27, 1813. In 1812 he was urged by his section as a candidate for congressional delegate. To him was accorded an admiration by Governor Holmes second only to that the Governor constantly expressed for Major Thomas Hinds.

Mims to the Tennessee capital. With his known impetuosity, though still weak from a wound received in a street duel with Thomas H. Benton, Jackson with a large force of west Tennesseans under his command, hastened to the Territory by way of Huntsville, now in the State of Alabama, joining his faithful subordinate, Colonel Coffee, who had preceded him on October 11 with 300 troops. Jackson's force had been called out by Governor Blount under the authority of the President of the United States.¹

General Claiborne, then in charge by order of General Flournoy of the Mississippi defenses in the Southern District, was henceforth to be assisted in the Northern District by General Jackson with his brave Tennessee troops, supported by United States regulars and numerous volunteers serving under Generals Coffee, Cocke, White and Floyd, the last mentioned commanding the volunteer forces from Georgia. These were to aid Jackson commanding the Northern District in his efforts to reduce the strength of the Creek Nation in such a manner as to render it of no assistance to the British. On his arrival at Camp Coffee on the south bank of the Tennessee, three miles above Ditto's Landing, Jackson, always

¹Cocke's East Tennessee Division also constituted a part of the defense, but these troops for the most part were acting independently.

eager and impatient for a battle with the enemies of his country, addressed the following letter to Governor Holmes, dated October 17, 1813, in which he outlines his campaign against the Creeks and asserts his intention of keeping his eye on Pensacola, where British troops were at that early period going in and out with perfect safety.¹

"Your letter of the 5th inst. was handed me today at this place which is situated on the south bank of the Tennessee River.

"The intention which I had when I wrote you on the 26th ulto of dispatching Col Coffee of the Cavalry, to the relief of Fort St. Stephens I was induced to change by information received from Col Perkins of Madison Cty M. T. & Capt McLellan commander of the forces at Ft. Hampton, that Huntsville, & Ft. Hampton were speedily to be attacked by a large force of the hostile Creeks on their march for that purpose. In consequence of this intelligence I immediately ordered Col Coffee with his Regiment to the protection of those places; & he encamped at this place about ten days ago. On the 11th I received an express from Col Coffee giving the information that in a very short time he expected, from the information he had received, to be attacked by a large body of the Creeks; in consequence of which I immediately hastened from the rendezvous at Fayetteville, with all the Infantry under

¹Autograph letter to Governor Holmes signed by Andrew Jackson on file in the Mississippi Historical Department.

my command, & by a forced march crossed the river & reached this place on the 12th.

“Having learned from what I esteem a correct source, that the settlements on the Mobile are no longer in danger, I have determined with all my forces to penetrate the heart of the Creek nation; & I think I shall thereby be enabled to make a more effectual diversion in your favour, than I could by any other measure. I had expected reinforcements from East Tennessee, & a co-operation from Georgia; but I begin to be apprehensive that their movements will be too slow for mine. I cannot bear to remain idle, eating the public beef to no purpose. I expect to leave this place tomorrow, & to move directly for the ten islands on the Coosa; & from thence to the junction of the Coosa & Tallapoosa; & ultimately, if not stopped, to Pensacola. There are now under my command about 2500 men; & altho it is greatly to be wished the number was greater, yet I will not despair to attain with these, the object of the expedition.

“In the meantime for the protection of the frontiers of Madison, Col Perkins has embodied at his own risk & upon his own responsibility a force of four hundred men. This is a measure which I am sure yr Excellency will not only sanction but very highly approve. In the event of my meeting with greater opposition from the Creeks than I now expect, & of my being without the reinforcements above mentioned, I shall take the liberty of calling upon Col Perkins for aid;

which I presume your Excellency will not disapprove."¹

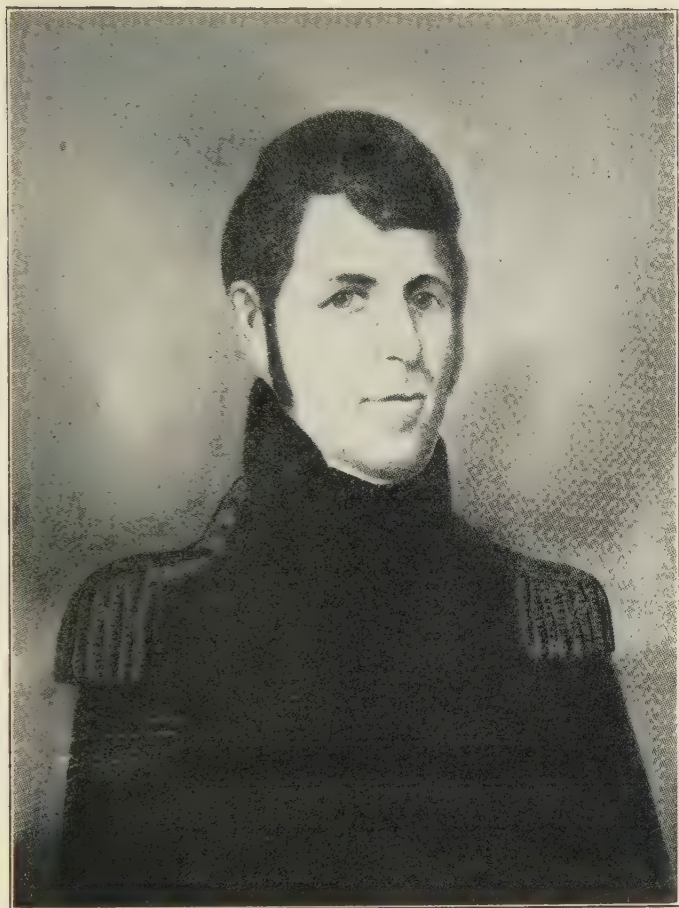
This was not Jackson's first military service in this region. One of the most annoying experiences of his war career—though it proved highly creditable to him in the end—had occurred during the early months of the War of 1812. In response to the call for troops he had, as General F. L. Claiborne had also done in the Mississippi Territory, organized a brigade of West Tennessee militia at Nashville, composed of splendid young men. These he brought and kept in camp for many weeks under the most trying conditions near Natchez. But he refused to turn over any of his men to General Wilkinson, then in command of the District. Notwithstanding Wilkinson's assertion that the detachment was not an independent command, as soon as he received orders from Washington he marched it home, disbanding it in Nashville in an address full of warm gratitude to Governor Holmes and the Mississippi Territory for their kindness to the Tennessee troops on this fruitless expedition. Many a bitter oath was reserved for Wilkinson, for whom he could never hide his contempt. His personal care

¹ Colonel Peter Perkins was a resident of Madison County, Mississippi Territory (now Madison County, Alabama) and his troops were drawn from the Territory. These Mississippi troops were constantly with Jackson during his campaign.

and protection of his troops on this expedition made it easy for him to collect volunteers ever after.

Again the Tennessee volunteers were called into service, as the Creeks were now at war with the people of the Mississippi Territory. Forgetting his past chagrin in this new enterprise Jackson entered into the campaign with his usual energy and enthusiasm. Immediately on his arrival he erected Fort Deposit, his first fortification, as a base of supplies, about October 22nd. The problem of supplies was to become one of the most serious of the campaign and some historians have attributed many of Jackson's mishaps in this connection to his incapacity for detail and his inability to struggle with more than one problem at a time.

The Tennessee army was organized in three brigades. Brigadier-General William Hall commanded the first which was composed of two regiments of volunteer infantry under Colonels Bradley and Pillow and numbered 1,400. The second was commanded by Brigadier-General Isaac Roberts. This, numbering about 600, was made up of two regiments of militiamen under Colonels Wayne and McRaven. General John Coffee commanded the third, a regiment of volunteer cavalry under Colonel Alcorn and a



Colonel Thomas Hinds.

regiment of mounted riflemen under Colonel Newton, consisting in all of 1,000 men. Only the operations of the Tennessee troops under Jackson will be traced at any length.

With his troops organized, Jackson continued his campaign from headquarters at Fort Strother which he had erected on the Coosa at the Ten Islands as a second fortified base. His locating a supply base at this fort and his decision to carry on a winter campaign against the Indians in the wild, heavily-timbered country, has been severely criticized by historians as showing lack of good military judgment. To this want of discernment in the matter of the comfort and safety of his soldiers may also be attributed much of the tendency to mutiny among his men. But that which would probably have daunted an ordinary soul acted only as a tonic to Andrew Jackson. His will power, always strong, was never more unyielding and invincible than at this period. Smarting under the notoriety that he had won for mere duelling, he longed for a glory that brought higher praise and this goal he had determined to make.

His poor health at the beginning and throughout the campaign has been the subject of many references by historians, Parton seeming to take delight in referring to him as having a sallow,

haggard face. Of his personal appearance Governor Holmes of the Mississippi Territory said: "General Jackson is about five feet eleven inches high, has large bones but thin of flesh. His face is rather narrow than otherwise, cheek bones prominent. His nose is tolerably large but not aquiline, countenance open, intelligent and determined." Judge Toulmin of the Mississippi Territory referring about this time to Jackson in a letter said that he "regarded neither God nor man."

CHAPTER XII

OPERATIONS IN THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT;
MASSACRE OF THE KIMBELL FAMILY; ATTACK
ON FORT SINQUEFIELD; MAJOR HINDS ASSISTS
CLAIBORNE IN DEFENSE OF THE SECTION; THE
DRAGOONS' BREACH WITH GENERAL FLOURNOY

IT was on September 1, 1813, that the home of Ransom Kimbell, a pioneer settler from South Carolina, was attacked by the Prophet Francis and his warriors, the Kimbell family with a party of friends and relatives having left the crowded stockade at Fort Sinquefield to be more comfortable in the farm house during the hot weather of late summer. It was in this unprotected condition that the entire party was surprised and fiendishly massacred by the Indians at 3 o'clock in the afternoon. The savages advanced suddenly from the fastnesses of the dense summer forest along Bassett Creek. The horrible deed was committed in a spirit similar to that which prevailed at Fort Mims, neither old age nor the mother of an unborn child being spared. Isham Kimbell, one of the two survivors, became a worthy citizen

of Clarke County, Alabama, where doubtless some descendant still resides.

From this strong and valiant-hearted pioneer folk who marked with untimely graves the trails that became open roads for other feet, many families in the population of both Mississippi and Alabama trace their lineage.

After the massacre of the Kimbell family, leaving the main party supposed to be still commanded by Weatherford, the Prophet Francis continued to operate in the forks of the Tombigbee, where, on the rich, alluvial lands, the hardy pioneers had established settlements, the more prosperous of them with the help of their slaves having started large plantations. It was of these fair lands of promise that the Indians grew jealous, seeing in the cultivated fields and pastures the passing of the hunting-grounds and the old buffalo trails.¹ And now that they had taken the war path, the Creeks determined to exterminate the encroaching white settlements root and branch, and but for the watchfulness and strategy of Claiborne, massacres would have become a common occurrence.

Immediately after the murder of the Kimbells and their friends and relatives, the Prophet made

¹ The Alibamos still claimed the land lying along the banks of the Tombigbee.

a direct attack on Fort Siquefield, to which the people in its vicinity had fled. The Fort was defended by a small but well prepared company of troopers sent by Colonel Carson from Fort Madison under the command of Lieutenant James Bailey, brother of the heroic Captain Dixon Bailey, who, though maternally of savage descent, had given his life at Fort Mims in behalf of the survival of the white race in America, having recognized in himself and in his children the claim of its superior ideals.

Among the brave horsemen sent with Lieutenant Bailey in defense of Fort Siquefield were James Wood, Isaac Hayden and James Smith. Few stories of the pioneer folk of America glow with more romance and adventure than those of the first settlers in this far southern region. Of the many daring feats daily performed, the charge made by young Isaac Hayden near this Fort upon one hundred painted savages with a pack of dogs and a pair of pistols was an exploit so romantic, savoring even of the preposterous, that it would, in all probability, have disconcerted a better trained soldiery than the Prophet Francis commanded. But one should not forget that the dogs with which the hero charged the Indians were pioneer dogs and that both dogs and men are taught to do their part in border life.

In the attack on Fort Sinquefield, the Indians did not display their usual strategy. While they very cunningly selected an hour when the gates of the Fort were open, the inmates being engaged in a burial service of the Kimbell party massacred a few days before, they failed to remember that the happenings of the last few days had rendered every mind alert and ready for defense and that their daylight approach down hill from the woods would be instantly caught by sharp eyes on the lookout for trouble. Though frantically urged forward by the Prophet himself, the Indians failed to surprise the gallant Lieutenant Bailey, who with his small party of dragoons conveyed the people safely to the Fort. Failing to overtake the party from the Fort and perceiving a few women at a spring, the Indians made a break in that direction. It was then that the fearless Hayden flew at them with every dog in the Fort, urging on his one hundred snarling canines and brandishing his pistols in such a clamorous and boisterous manner that the savages, abashed at the performance, stood stock still while, with the exception of one who was overtaken and slain, the women passed in safety to the Fort. After several hours' fierce struggle, Francis and his men retreated, amid a whirl of bullets,

leaving the excited defenders of the Fort victors though for the moment shaken with fear.

The next morning the inmates of Sinquefield made their way to Fort Madison, where they breathed more freely after their terrifying experience. Some had attempted to carry along clothing and food and the journey was a painful one, filled as all were with fear of momentary attack by some lurking band of savages. It was with sad hearts, too, that they had left the newly-made graves of their relatives and friends. It is little wonder that even such hardy spirits as theirs were depressed. In their own fireside superstitions, the stars had foretold their sorry plight, there was blood on the moon and the letter "W" on the wing of the locust. It was a dark day in American history but it had its significance. It was the advance of civilization to the far outer rim of its adventuring efforts; and scattered everywhere on the lonely frontier beneath the trees that were still a part of the virgin forest were hundreds of shallow graves, silent testimonials of the sacrifice of the first comers who cleared and made the fair land habitable for their race.

Tragic occurrences, such as have been related, were being daily reported to General Claiborne. The Creeks were now actively at war, and murder, rapine and pillage marked their furtive trail

along the frontier. Nor could Claiborne ever draw them into the open. After verification of a persistent rumor that a combined attack by the Indians was to be made on Fort Madison, General Claiborne ordered Colonel Carson and Major Hinds, the latter now having arrived on the frontier, to quit that stockade and march to Fort St. Stephens as a place of greater safety.¹ Colonel Carson took with him about 500 settlers, men, women and children, with a view toward their better protection. It was natural that any settlers still remaining in that section should feel alarmed at the evacuation of Fort Madison, and so urgent were they in their entreaties for protection that General Claiborne, who had left the order discretionary with Colonel Carson, now hurriedly sent him a dispatch not to abandon Fort Madison if he felt sure his forces could protect it. Colonel Carson had already moved out and for a short time Fort Madison was left without military defense, except that afforded by its eighty citizens who immediately enrolled themselves under the valiant Captains Austill and Dale. The latter was

¹ Colonel Carson was the military commander of the territory between the Alabama and Tombigbee Rivers in which region were located Fort Glass and Fort Madison and it was to General Claiborne with headquarters at Mount Vernon, forty miles distant, that he sent young Jerry Austill, who later became a border hero, with a special communication. The hardy youth traveled alone through a heavily timbered country filled with roving bands of Indians.

recovering from wounds he had received at Burnt Corn and was thirsting for revenge on the Indians. This force was not required to maintain the Fort very long alone for Colonel Carson soon returned with his large company of women and children.

For many days General Claiborne with his small but trusted army moved from place to place wherever the need seemed most urgent. The forts were scattered and the Indians were roving in small predatory bands everywhere; no one could tell where they would next concentrate their attack. Every settlement and every fort was appealing to Claiborne for protection and it was with the utmost care and the highest order of generalship that he prevented, as has already been observed, numerous other massacres.

General Claiborne was criticized by a few short-sighted persons at the time for removing the garrison for several weeks from Fort Madison, but judging from all the circumstances he clearly thought it the best policy until he could feel assured that the Indians were not gathering in such numbers that Colonel Carson could not maintain its defense.

The situation was anything but pleasing. As yet the Choctaws, though allied with the Americans, had furnished no troops and it was with

much relief that the people heard that Pushmataha had visited St. Stephens with a proposal to enlist several companies of Choctaw soldiers for the American cause.

The celebrated chieftain met with much encouragement from General Claiborne and was accompanied to Mobile by Mr. George Gaines where the formal acceptance of the troops by General Flournoy took place. The commanding general, having by this time thoroughly embraced General Claiborne's view of the Indian matter, now no longer directed him to act on the defensive but, to his great relief, empowered him to attack. The order, however, did not provide for an invasion of the Creek country. This was much desired by Claiborne who continued to urge Flournoy to send him the 7th Regiment and to empower him to attack the Indians, destroy their villages and towns and thus put an end to the war.

After arriving home, Pushmataha, renowned among the Choctaws for his wisdom and discretion, assembled the most powerful rulers and heads of the nation, and through his convincing eloquence federated them actively with the Americans. The Chickasaws, too, were attached to the Americans through the efforts of Colonel McKee and John Pitchlyn. It was, however, as has already been said, largely due to the statesman-

ship of Governor Holmes and General Claiborne that the aid of both the Choctaws and the Chickasaws was successfully enlisted. Their alliance with the American Republic was a diplomatic and strategical master-stroke in the defense of the coast against British invasion. After the negotiations almost immediately Pushmataha and a Company of Choctaw warriors joined Claiborne for military service.

It was about this time that young Thomas Hinds with the Mississippi Dragoons became of valuable service to General Claiborne in defense of the eastern frontier. The following extracts from the "Encyclopedia of Mississippi History" drawn from original records relative to the furnishing of troops by Governor David Holmes will give the reader some idea of the organization of this troop of horse in the Mississippi Territory:

"Previous to the Fort Mims massacre, Governor Holmes ordered five companies of infantry and the cavalry to be in readiness to move at the shortest notice. The Mississippi Dragoons were among the first to respond. This famous cavalry battalion was composed of the Jefferson Troop commanded by Thomas Hinds before his promotion; the Adams Troop with James Kempe¹ cap-

¹"James Kempe, the grandfather of Mrs. Jefferson Davis, was a native of Castlefin, County Donegal, Ireland, and was one of the 'United Irishmen' of 1798, compelled to flee to America," wrote Anthony Campbell, the last survivor of these Irish immi-

tain, the Madison Troop, J. G. Richardson captain and the Amite Troop, Henry Dunn captain; in all about 200 men."

In his General Orders issued at Liberty during the month of September, 1813, Governor Holmes said:

"The commander-in-chief has witnessed with the utmost satisfaction the alacrity shewn by the cavalry in repairing to the standard of their country upon his call for their services. The corps is composed of men in whose patriotism and courage their fellow citizens must have the utmost confidence. Not soldiers from compulsion, or from necessity, they have placed themselves in the front ranks of danger to oppose a savage foe now threatening our country with destruction and devastation."

The battalion was composed of the very pick of the young manhood of the Mississippi Territory and notwithstanding the estimate placed on it by General Flournoy, commanding at Mobile, it was destined to take a leading part in General grants in Mississippi. Henry S. Foote had it that he was born in Virginia. Kempe succeeded Benjamin Farrar as Captain of the Adams Troop of horse and won distinction in the New Orleans campaign. He died at Natchez in 1820, leaving a numerous family of sons and daughters. One of the daughters, as Foote said, married William B. Howell of Natchez, son of Richard Howell, a revolutionary officer and governor of New Jersey. Campbell wrote of these families, "What a clutch of true blues there will be between the blood of Howell and Kempe." See Rowland's "Encyclopedia of Mississippi History."

Jackson's Coast Campaign against the British. It was organized by order of Governor David Holmes for immediate use on the frontier to meet the Indian situation.

The cavalry had gone forward on the 18th of September with the 3rd United States Infantry commanded by Colonel Gilbert C. Russell which had been and continued to be throughout the War largely recruited by volunteers from the Mississippi Territory. Governor Holmes in a message that followed their arrival in the war zone announced that "the arrival of these troops renders the entire force on the eastern frontier efficient and reputable."

Colonel Peter Perkins' troops, furnished by the Mississippi Territory and reorganized by Perkins on the frontier, it has been seen, were to coöperate with Jackson's army composed of Tennessee troops. Later, Governor Holmes sent another regiment under the gallant Colonel Nixon¹ to the seat of war. Two more companies were sent

¹ Colonel Nixon was born in Virginia and after living some years in South Carolina removed in 1809 to the Mississippi Territory. He was among the first to offer his services in defense of his country. During the Creek War, Colonel Nixon at the head of a considerable force scoured the swamps of the Perdido and other streams and killed and captured many Indians. After he had accomplished all he could, he marched to the head of the Perdido, where he divided his command, sending Major William Peacock with the troops of the 39th to the boat-yard on Lake Tensaw, while he marched the remainder of his command to Fort Claiborne. He was an excellent officer and served

to this regiment in February, 1814, from Colonel Neilson's regiment (Amite County) and Captain Rapalje's company from Washington. When the term of enlistment expired in April, 1814, the Governor wrote to the colonel of the 3rd United States Infantry: "I have ordered six companies of infantry to be drafted and marched to the eastern frontier as expeditiously as possible." To Colonel Nixon the Governor wrote: "These six companies with the two that marched under the command of Major Swayze and as many more as can be prevailed upon will form your command." Though the Territory was sparsely settled every man who could bear a gun, as Governor Holmes noted in a message, was in the service at some period of the campaign in the South against the British.¹

Aided now by reinforcements General Claiborne guarding the Southern District continued to throw his forces with the utmost confidence against the Indians wherever they appeared. To

to the end of the war. He was a member of the convention that formed the first constitution of the State of Mississippi, and was, afterwards, frequently a state senator. He died in Pearlinton, Mississippi, in 1824. He was a large, fine-looking man, with fair complexion. He was very popular.

¹ Jefferson Davis, President of the Southern Confederacy, writing of this period many years later said: ". . . When news came of the approach of the British army to attack New Orleans, the sons of Wilkinson County went in such numbers to defend the city, that the county court held a draft to keep a certain proportion of the men at home, for police purposes. The records of the County probably contain the particulars of the event, of which I have only the recollection of what a child would hear."

the chivalrous, adventure-loving commander of the Mississippi Dragoons he entrusted a large portion of the territory under his command, employing the gallant troop of horse to scour the country in pursuit of the roving bands of Indians who were menacing the white settlements. That General Claiborne's spirited movements before the arrival of Jackson on October 17th awed and deterred the Indians and prevented them from gathering in sufficient force for a general attack on the settlements cannot be questioned. In keeping the main body of the Indians confined to their own territory he rendered the State a service the value of which entitles him to the highest praise.

It was during these days that the Mississippi Dragoons became involved in a controversy with General Flournoy. This battalion was made up of the sons of the first families of the Mississippi Territory, and the troopers bore themselves, it must be admitted, a trifle arrogantly while at the same time undergoing every privation and hardship most cheerfully.

Their haughty air and self-confident manner did not meet with the approbation of the commander of the District at Mobile. Seeking military glory through adventure and chafing under restrictions, it is plain that the high-spirited bat-

talion acted as an irritant to a commander who proved as captious and choleric as they.

General Claiborne regretted their inability to coöperate amicably with the commanding general of the District and deplored the communication which they had addressed to him, a remonstrance that must have been very tart, judging from the increased heat on the part of General Flournoy. Knowing the real worth of the spirited troop of horse, he refused to take sides with the General in the controversy that followed. Both Claiborne and Jackson were always in perfect accord with the gallant young commander of the Dragoons. Throughout the fall of 1813 Claiborne depended on him at every turn in checking the movements of the wily foe, while General Jackson, becoming acquainted with his rare capacity as a cavalry officer and his ability as a leader, selected him in the autumn of 1814 to lead the army to Pensacola.

Despite the attitude of General Flournoy, the adventurous, self-reliant Dragoons were to reap the glory they sought. Stung by the criticism and restriction of a superior at Mobile, the mettlesome battalion continued bravely and light-heartedly to follow Claiborne along the frontier and in the forks of the Tombigbee which immediately after the tragedy at Fort Mims became the scene of

numerous bloody encounters between Mississippi troops and the Indians. Instigated by the revengeful Prophet Francis, bloodthirsty warriors crept in small bands from settlement to settlement, making a holocaust of the deserted homes, killing any who had lingered and carrying off the fattest cattle for the war feasts in which they were now constantly indulging.

CHAPTER XIII

CAPTAIN SAM DALE AND THE "CANOE FIGHT"

IT was during the incessant guerrilla warfare, filled with pillage and murder by the Indians in the rich river settlements along the eastern borders of the Territory, that the famous Mississippi frontiersman, Sam Dale, again appears on the stage. A native of Rockbridge County, Virginia, descended from a line of border heroes, he was well fitted to act his part in the affairs of his adopted section. Having in a measure recovered from his wounds received earlier in the war, he sought the field once more with a determination to help General Claiborne drive the Indians from the country. Colonel Carson, who had returned to Fort Madison, was prevailed on to furnish him with a sufficient force to put his plans into execution. He was provided with a detachment of thirty Mississippi volunteers from Captain Jones' company, while forty of the Clarke County militia were detailed to accompany him in his rather hazardous adventure. The expedition, though the soldiers were all poorly equipped and faced the

late autumn thinly clad and barefoot, had to its credit the remarkable "Canoe Fight" on the waters of the Alabama in which four of Dale's party distinguished themselves as border heroes.¹

This hand to hand conflict was, perhaps, one of the wildest ever staged in frontier history. The heavy primeval forest, beneath which glided the still river, now at low water mark and wrapped in autumnal shadows, was selected as the site of the gruesome tragedy. And was it not perhaps its solemn beauty appealing to the highest in them that had made its wild, red children swear to defend it "as long as the sun shall shine and there shall be water in the river"?

The description of the fierce struggle by local historians is filled with details of such a gruesome nature that the hideous and revolting particulars will not be enumerated here, the heroic courage and devotion of the combatants of both sides being things of more moment.

Captain Dale and his little company, after putting to flight a small band of mounted Indians in the open, had formed the advance in the encounter. Screened from view by the river bank covered

¹ While emphasizing Captain Dale's daring and courage in this affair, Captain Jones presents a rather meager report of the encounter with the Indians. Historians, writing of this exploit and basing their facts on statements and records of eyewitnesses, all agree that it was one of the most marvelous feats of pioneer warfare.

with tall cane, forest trees and undergrowth, they were engaged in preparing a needed repast when they discovered gliding down the Alabama in slow, stately fashion an unusually large and handsome flat-bottomed canoe in which sat, with erect forms and dignified mien, a company of Indian warriors. They were partly clothed in rich panther skins, their faces and strong bare limbs painted with the brilliant hues of the puccoon. With august decorum, bearing their guns before them, they were the personification of the Indian War Spirit at ceremonial moments. The solemn touch of dignity, acquired doubtless by long contact with the silent things of nature, vanished instantly as soon as they discovered the Americans. In a moment they were only painted savages filled with the spirit of revenge and thirsting for the blood of the hated foe. What race, alas! has proved itself much better?

The boats of Captain Dale, under the command of the famous Jerry Austill, floated along the river in sight of the troopers who kept to the river bank in search of the enemy. They were near the home of the brave Dixon Bailey who had given his life in the defense of Fort Mims and the memory of that gallant soldier filled them with a hot desire to punish his slayers. Alarmed at the approach of the whites, the Indians paddled back

to concealment in the mouth of Randon Creek. Discovering that the largest part of Dale's company had crossed the river to the western bank, the canoe emerged again, anxiety and watchfulness having taken the place of proud unconcern on the faces of its occupants.

As they moved cautiously down the river, Captain Dale and his little party fired upon the stately crew, to which the proud warriors replied instantly, showing their readiness for battle. After several exchanges of rifle shots which resulted in little injury to either side, Captain Dale sprang into his small boat and called to his men to follow him; three instantly obeyed their leader. The combatants drew nearer each other and the fight grew desperate. The bold attacking party, besides their redoubtable captain, was made up of Jeremiah Austill, James Smith and the powerful and courageous slave Caesar, a half-breed Indian negro. This faithful creature, who had now taken charge of the little boat, rowed alongside the large canoe and with might and main held his craft in position while the fight raged. The Indians fought desperately, for they knew that "Big Sam," as they called Captain Dale, was their antagonist. Many a brave story had they heard of this wonderful man both as a trader and a fighter. But they were not afraid

to measure lances with him as was unconsciously shown in their grimly spoken challenge, "Now for it, Big Sam!"

In and out of the water, but more often with feet planted firmly in their boats, which the burly Caesar kept lashed together, the combatants fought with a fury known only to border warfare. When the close and deadly struggle came to an end the hero Dale found himself in the enemy's boat while eleven of the best warriors of the proud Muscogee tribe had perished in defense of their native land. Both the living and the dead were covered with wounds and upon the breast of the red man and the Anglo-Saxon alike could well have been placed the Distinguished Service Cross. This hand-to-hand combat, fierce and daring as any known to history, remains undimmed in comparison with the feat of the dauntless three who held the bridge in the days of ancient Rome. Henceforth Dale, Austill and Smith became names to conjure with in both Jackson's and Claiborne's army, while Caesar's desperate courage, as it was shown not only in action, but, also, in the dead silence that bound his lips, to be broken only in his urging the use of the knife and bayonet, clearly proves that the heroic deeds of that day were not all confined to the free races.

After the short but terrific encounter, gathering

up his little band, Captain Dale, whose exploits make some of the most colorful pages of Southern pioneer history, marched back to Fort Madison. It was in this manner that the brave Mississippi soldiery, descended from good Revolutionary fighting stock and patriotic to the core, kept the Creeks at bay on the forks of the Tombigbee, along the Alabama, and up and down the southern frontier in the first months of the war.

General Claiborne had always felt that in order to rid the country of the Indians it would be necessary to deal them a concentrated blow on their own soil. He again urged General Flournoy to send him into the Creek Nation with a sufficient force to attack them in their strongholds and cripple their strength by destroying their towns.

That General Flournoy had at last arrived at the same opinion held by General Claiborne regarding the trouble with the Creeks was very gratifying to the Mississippian, though the harsh war measures recommended by the commanding general, who had now gone to the other extreme in his views on the Indian situation, were not in keeping with Claiborne's code of ethics. Even when dealing with savages, though always to be feared in battle, no foe was ever taken undue advantage of by this knightly and kindly soul. Throughout the months of September, October

and November, he had been kept busy in the Southern District, his brave volunteers fighting daily battles in guarding the defenseless inhabitants from sudden slaughter. With him for much of the time rode Major Thomas Hinds and his eager-hearted dragoons. These as a whole were taking their first lessons in warfare, a game in which they were destined to play a shining part. Even at this time their commander was becoming conspicuous for his courage and initiative, and of him General Claiborne confidently said to the old border hero Sam Dale, "When you see danger ahead take Hinds with you."

It was during these days that Major Hinds with a number of dragoons in a daring foray overtook and killed ten Creek warriors. The young cavalry officer constantly preferring service of a most strenuous and hazardous nature, notwithstanding his breach with Flournoy, continued close to Claiborne, and drew from him many warm expressions of praise, while to his battalion of choice spirits he had become a trusted leader.

While operating at this seat of war, the main body of Indians usually kept within the dense, heavily timbered swamps, sallying forth in companies sometimes numbering as many as a hundred, but very often composed of not more than a dozen warriors. During such forays and raids,

conducted with the utmost suddenness, the Creeks picked off many of the brave scouts of the American army and put to sudden death the inmates of many lonely farm houses. Scouting parties of the whites went frequently in search of the Indians and it was during one of these excursions that Carson lost some of his bravest men. The stories of Beard and Walker are filled with the wildest adventure, resulting in the death of the former at the hands of a savage. The gallant young soldier Bradberry, who had won fame as a good fighter at Burnt Corn, also lost his life in one of these forays. In a similar manner some earlier Colonel William McGrew had been killed. While pursuing a party of Indians over stream and through forest and field on the northern bank of the Tombigbee, he suddenly came upon them on Bashi Creek to find them more ready for battle than he dreamed. In the severe encounter that followed the brave man with three of his company was killed. Several days later when General Claiborne with Major Hinds and the Mississippi Dragoons was marching in pursuit of the Indians, who hovered in small bodies everywhere, he found and interred with military honors the bodies of the four heroes, pioneer Mississippians who had sacrificed their lives willingly in

defense of their country. The loss of such lives was a serious blow to a young Territory whose population was scant and rural community life, to a large extent unformed.

CHAPTER XIV

JACKSON'S CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE CREEKS

AT this place will be enumerated and described the battles and encounters with the Creeks in which Jackson's troops were engaged. No more invincible soldiery went out in defense of the country during the second struggle for American Independence than the troops of Tennessee, and we rear on this page a signal monument to these defenders and lovers of liberty.

But one should not forget that border warfare of the severest nature had been conducted by troops of the Mississippi Territory throughout the Southern District before General Jackson's forces fought at Tallussahatchie the initial battle of his campaign. Even in the ranks of Jackson's own army large numbers of Mississippi troops had enlisted. Recruiting stations were established at several points in the Territory, and volunteers from the Mississippi Territory entered various commands. Jackson at all times had the control and use of Colonel Perkins and his volunteer brigade of frontiersmen, while later in the fall

two companies of Colonel Nixon's regiment, Downs' and Bond's, marched with the United States regulars to Alabama Heights.

Jackson's letters to Governor Holmes indicate a full appreciation of the aims and plans of the army in the Southern District. Knowing that Claiborne was defending the Mobile country and river settlements he with great confidence pressed against the Indians to the north. His campaign against the Creeks during the autumn of 1813 opened with the battle of Tallussahatchie, November 3rd. A successful attack had been made at Littefutche led by Colonel Dyer with 200 cavalry sent out from Fort Deposit, where Jackson had established headquarters, and foraging parties had captured a few Indians and negroes, camp-followers of Weatherford's army. The Creeks, learning that the Americans were near by, collected a large force at the town of Tallussahatchie a short distance from their headquarters. After locating the town and the extent of its defense, General Jackson sent Brigadier-General John Coffee with 1,000 men to destroy the place. No better officer could have been entrusted with the daring enterprise. He was a strong, fearless, broad-shouldered West Tennessean, fitted for the most strenuous service, and in addition was bound to Jackson by family ties,

having married a niece of Mrs. Jackson. Half of the troops were to constitute the attacking party while the rest reconnoitered the Ten Island country as preliminary to future movements. The Tennesseans were well supplied with good rifles and were in their best fighting mood. A picturesque band of Creeks and Cherokees friendly to the whites, arrayed in the white head-dress which was their emblem of peace, led Coffee's men against the war party. The battle began at sunrise, the turbulent savages rushing forward amid war whoops and the beating of drums, their prophets breathing vengeance upon the invaders, and on any of Indian blood who assisted them. Though both men and women struggled to the last, they fought a losing fight without once asking quarter of their well-armed foes. Not one would desert the field, but men, women and children perished together.

On November 3, 1813, General Jackson wrote to Governor Blount of Tennessee relative to the battle, "We have retaliated for the destruction of Fort Mims." In his report of the same day General Coffee said, "Not one of the warriors escaped to carry the news." General Jackson, however, says in his report that one made his escape. The losses of the whites were five killed and forty-one wounded. When one considers the distance the

Tennesseans had marched to meet the foe in a wild and unknown country the feat might well be compared with the brave old deeds that marked the campaigns of Alexander or of Hannibal. But for what purpose? The story itself is good enough.

Following the successful attack on the Indians by General Coffee, on November 3, 1813, General Jackson moved to Ten Islands where he had erected Fort Strother. With an army of 1200 infantry and 800 cavalry he moved on the town of Talladega, thirty miles to the south, where on November 9th he raised the siege then going on at that place a settlement consisting of 154 inhabitants.

The town having been the rendezvous of a large number of Creeks friendly to the Americans was now beleaguered by a thousand or more of the war party led by wrathful Creek prophets. For all their magic and black art, these were no match for the astute disciple of peace who clothed in a shaggy hogskin passed through their ranks at night on all fours from the invested place. Grunting and rooting his way out of the town he bounded to his feet, wrapped his grotesque disguise about him and fled to Jackson's camp to implore aid from that mighty paleface. The Tennesseans received their envoy with shouts of

laughter and applause and straightway marched at dawn to the relief of the besieged redskins who—and here the laughter dies down into a sigh—passed out of the stronghold over the bleeding bodies of hundreds of dead warriors who had given their lives in defense of their race.

Following Coffee's successful strategy, Jackson surrounded and penned the Indians up, and but for a gap in his lines where the infantry had fallen back, they would have been completely exterminated at this time. Reserves could not be found to mend the breach and nearly 700 Indians, seizing their opportunity, fled through the opening and made their escape in the face of Jackson's whole army. Jackson lost fifteen men and had 85 wounded. These, with the wounded of the battle of Tallussahatchie, must have given the American camp much of the air of a hospital.

Writing of this battle to General Claiborne, General Jackson said:

"It is impossible to tell with any precision the loss they sustained. We counted, however, 299 dead on the field but this is known to fall considerably short of the number really killed. Could I have followed up that victory immediately the Creek War before this had been terminated but I was compelled by a double cause—the want of supplies and the want of coöperation from the East Tennessee troops—to return to this place."

A strong jealousy, historians all agree, existed between the East Tennessee and the West Tennessee troops. This feeling interfered seriously at times with Jackson's operations in the Creek War, and explains this reference in his letter to the East Tennessee troops. Near the close of his letter to Claiborne, General Jackson makes this significant statement:

"It is not understood by the Government that this war is to be confined to mere temporary incursions into the enemy's country. Such movements might distress them but would produce none of those lasting and beneficial effects which I design to be produced."

Two distinct mutinous outbreaks in the Tennessee army occurred during this time, the quelling of which taxed Jackson's ability to the utmost. This he only partially succeeded in doing. As this spirit became very definite resulting in a serious loss of troops, few generals in the face of it would have continued to hold what he doggedly termed his advance. Historians have attributed the spirit of mutiny at different times among his troops to various causes, the main one being that they claimed the time of their enlistment had expired, but the extreme hardships of wilderness warfare with savage foes is the most likely reason.

On November 18, 1813, occurred what Halbert rightfully calls the "Hillabee Massacre."¹ That staid historian characterizes it as a "deplorable action" and it was, indeed, little else than butchery. For American troops to have made war on as low a plane as did the savages was a poor expression of the Christian civilization claimed by the superior race. Negotiations were then pending for the surrender of the Hillabees, and it was a rude awakening for the helpless creatures, generally faithful to their vows, to find that "their scrap of paper" had been cast to the winds by the great Jackson.² It is hoped that they located the real source for blame. That Generals Cocke and White did not possess Jackson's and Claiborne's ideals when dealing with the Creeks is clearly shown in the reports of the Hillabee affair. While the spirit with which the two last mentioned waged war was as stern and invincible as

¹ This battle was fought by General White with a thousand men of Major-General Cocke's division of East Tennessee troops who carried out General Cocke's orders to attack the town while the Hillabee Indians were arranging terms with General Jackson for its surrender. As Jackson was regarded as the commander-in-chief of the Tennessee army one can readily understand why the Hillabees accused him of bad faith. His differences with General John Cocke, who commanded a body of East Tennessee troops in the Mississippi Territory, and the lack of coöperation with him on the part of that general do not bear particularly upon the main story but may be found in full in Parton's "Life of Andrew Jackson," Vol. I.

² Eaton in his "Life of Andrew Jackson" gives a full account of this circumstance and exonerates Jackson from all blame.

Caesar's or Napoleon's, humanity and its kindlier purpose can be clearly discerned in their treatment of the helpless savages when at their mercy. Whenever an act on the part of the troops commanded by either of these great leaders took the form of mere butchery, such conduct always received severe condemnation and it is not too much to place the fierce Jackson in the same class with General Claiborne in this characterization, as numberless instances show. Throughout his campaign, whenever wholesale destruction for the Muscogees seemed to be their inevitable portion he gave all due deference to the flag of truce when hoisted in token of surrender.

That the Indians in some places were still having civil war among themselves and were in large numbers joining the party friendly to the whites, their scant records of the war reveal. Still the spirit of self-preservation united the main body of the Creek Nation in a great army to resist both Jackson and Claiborne with the most heroic efforts. Notwithstanding desertions from their ranks this spirit grew stronger each day and they fiercely resisted the despoilers of their towns and villages.

It was during the last week of autumn on November 29th that General Floyd with 950 Georgia militia supported by two friendly Indian

chieftains, Mad-dog and Tookabatchee, with their following of about 400 warriors, attacked the town of Autossee, one of the most attractive on the south bank of the beautiful and historic Tallapoosa. The place was situated near the Hickory Ground. In the battle which also partook largely of a massacre the town was completely destroyed with several other inland villages, notable among them the Apple Grove, the birthplace of the renowned half-breed chieftain Alexander McGillivray, whose descendants were equally divided among the contending forces.

The struggle at Autossee was especially fierce, over 200 warriors being slain outright, while General Floyd received a wound, his services to Jackson ending with this battle. In many of these skirmishes the fights assumed the proportions of real battles. The Indians whose country was being invaded and made desolate were now fighting for the preservation of their race, homes and hunting-grounds, and though savage and untutored, they were as much attached to their native heath as the Anglo-Saxon had ever been to his. While now rarely on the aggressive, as they had been earlier in the war, at Fort Mims and throughout the Southern District, no fiercer resistance was ever offered by a people than that with which they met Jackson when attacked on

their own soil, and by superior numbers. To them by this time "Captain Jackson," as they called him, had loomed into a mysterious and prodigious power of evil to do them harm. But even as formidable as he appeared the Hillabees did not shrink from him in battle and more than once boasted of having put him to flight. In every encounter they met him with the indomitable spirit of a free people. The Georgians, too, through the beautiful Callabee Valley, had more than once heard the sharp twang of their bows and felt the sting of their arrows.

CHAPTER XV

CLAIBORNE'S VICTORY AT HOLY GROUND

AT his camp at Pine Level in Clarke County General Claiborne received orders on November 10th from General Flournoy to quit that post for another field of action and advance with the Southern army to the Alabama. It was with eagerness that his troops broke camp on November 13th, and moved forward to Weatherford's Bluff, where they were to make preparations for General Jackson, who was, contrary to the opinion of some historians, looking anxiously towards Pensacola, now believed by both Jackson and Claiborne to be the real seat of trouble.¹ According to spies sent to that place, British agents had been for many weeks, even months, distributing munitions of war to the Indians. On November 17th Claiborne crossed the Alabama River and halted at Weatherford's Bluff. Here his troops, cheerful despite the scantiness of food and clothing, fortified themselves for future action,

¹ See Pickett, Vol. 2, p. 266. See also Jackson's letter, quoted in this volume, to Governor Holmes on his arrival in the Mississippi Territory, dated Camp Coffee, April, 1813.

Pushmataha's warriors practising daily with the new rifles given them at Fort Madison, and, if tradition can be trusted, sallying forth to take a view of Burnt Corn, the fame of which had spread far into the Choctaw Nation. It was in a spirit of exultation that the famous chieftain claimed that he put to flight a party of Creeks whom he found occupying the famous battleground.

After constructing a strong fort to which his soldiers gave his magnetic name, Claiborne wrote to Governor Holmes giving him an account of the concentration of his troops and announcing his determination to intercept and break communication between the Indians and Pensacola. A letter, also, went to General Jackson congratulating him on his victories in the Northern District and still another went to Governor Holmes expressing a fervent desire that all the troops should be hurled against Pensacola.¹

¹In his letter to Governor Holmes, Claiborne said:

"I am now on the east bank of the Alabama, thirty-five miles above Mims, and in the best part of the enemy's country. From this position we cut the savages off from the river, and from their growing crops. We likewise render their communication with Pensacola more hazardous. Here will be deposited for the use of General Jackson, a supply of provisions, and I hope I shall be ordered to co-operate with him. Colonel Russell of the Third U. S. Infantry has been ordered to co-operate with the Georgia troops, and is now on his march to this place. We have by several excursions alarmed the Indians, and the possession of this important position will induce them to retire. I have with me Pushmataha, who, with fifty-one warriors, accom-

The last battle of the year, 1813, was to fall to General Claiborne and his Mississippi regiments. Carrying out his long cherished desire, he gathered a strong force about him composed, with the exception of the 3rd U. S. Regiment, entirely of Mississippi commands in which were scattered a number of Louisiana volunteers. To these he confided his determination to march to the enemy's capital. This fortress of two hundred houses, fortified after the Indian manner, bore the sacred name of Econachaca, called also Ikanachaka—the Holy Ground. "The fortress and town were erected," says the historian, Claiborne, "by Weatherford on the south bank of the Alabama 125 miles from Fort Claiborne just after the massacre of Fort Mims." It was designed for a safe haven for the Creeks in time of trouble. A rude citadel, planted on a little peninsula jutting out into the river and set in the deep forest, it was surrounded on the land side by marshes, slashes and bayous. No path that ran to it had ever been trod by the foot of the white man. Guarded by 10,000 ungoverned and rampant savages, it yet—notwithstanding its wizard circles and the incantations of its holy men—was not impenetrable to the conquering race that now sought to be accompanied by Lieutenant Calahan of the volunteers, will march this morning and take up a position to intercept more effectually the communication of the enemy with Pensacola."

overwhelm it. It was here that, with the spirit of the Inquisition, the Prophet Francis had ordered all prisoners to be burned at the stake, and here he had boasted that no enemy of the Creek could tread without being blasted by the hand of the Great Spirit.

Unlike Weatherford, for whose fairness and courage he had always had respect, Francis had ever been an object of aversion to General Claiborne. For him to punish this heartless and wily fanatic in his own stronghold and put an end forever to his flummeries and wizardry was an undertaking which he espoused with as fervid zeal as ever fired the breast of a twelfth century knight. Every soldier in his command when fully acquainted with his purpose shared in his aspiration and battle spirit. Smarting under the injustice and petty spite of censorious critics and seeing in the expedition the goal to which they had long looked forward, with spirits overflowing with love of adventure and patriotic fervor, the loyal volunteers, though their term of enlistment had expired and the prospect was anything but inviting, voluntarily reënlisted in the service.

While some of Claiborne's officers at first opposed an expedition into the Creek country, going so far as to petition him to desist from what seemed largely a quixotic enterprise, they con-

cluded their petition with the soldierly utterance that "Be your decision what it may, we shall cheerfully obey your orders and carry out your plans." The objections set forth in the memorial were of such a compelling nature that a purpose less firm than Claiborne's would have been shaken. It drew his attention to the facts that it was winter and the cold, soaking rains had set in; that the unknown and untrodden wilderness must be traversed; to the impossibility of taking supplies with them and the present condition of the army, without clothes, shoes or blankets. A number of other reasons were offered, perhaps the most urgent and pathetic being that a total failure of that year's crops had left their families destitute. This would have been sufficient, it seemed, to have cooled his ardor for the expedition. But notwithstanding all this and the fact that the Tennessee troops and all others engaged in the service usually went home at the expiration of their term of enlistment, Claiborne gave the order to break camp and every man flew to his gun and took his place in the line of march.

On the morning of December 13th, Fort Claiborne was abandoned and the Mississippi army at their trusted General's command moved forward towards the Creek capital to confront not only the bitter Francis but the fierce Weather-

ford himself.¹ The frontier army of 1,000 patriots was made up of Claiborne's volunteers, Colonel Joseph Carson's regiment of Mississippi troops, the 3rd United States Regiment of Infantry, largely recruited with Mississippians, Major Cassells' valiant battalion of horse, a battalion of militia commanded by Major Benjamin Smoot in which Patrick May, Sam Dale, Creagh and Heard, border fighters who had already won their *croix de guerre*, were officers. These with 150 fine Choctaw warriors under the celebrated Pushmataha made up the army. To this deft and adroit chieftain, now a brigadier-general in the United States Army, is largely due the enthusiasm with which the Choctaws participated in the invasion of the Creek country.

The Mississippi Volunteers, possessing much of the manner and air of the Cavalier, were in gay, good humor, forgetting all their discomforts and anxieties once they were on the road. Through the pathless deep woods they wound their way, maintaining a martial bearing that would have compared favorably with that of any frontier soldiery in the history of America. The valiant commander appeared much in the light

¹ It is thought by Halbert after close investigation that Weatherford was never present at any battle but that of the Holy Ground after the Massacre of Fort Mims, yet he did not hold to this opinion, in his sketch of Weatherford written many years before his later researches.

of an early crusader, imbued as he was with the spirit of freedom and filled with a sacred desire to plant the emblems of Christianity in the strongholds of the pagan.

On December 23rd, the troops approached the Holy City. Even as they advanced upon it, prisoners, both white and half-breeds, were being bound to the stake to await the fagot and torch. The Indians, notwithstanding their claim of perfect security within their Holy of Holies, at the approach of Claiborne's army hurriedly began beating the war-drums and gathering their numerous forces into battle-line. The Mississippians could hear the heavy roll of drums as they entered the outskirts of the town. Through the swamps and over the bayous and lagoons surrounding the fortress the whole army steadily pushed its way, General Claiborne riding at the head of the cavalry. The troops behaved with great credit, Major Smoot especially bearing himself in true military form. Major Cassells, commanding mounted rifles, suffered some criticism as to the manner of stationing his troops.

The subtle and inscrutable Weatherford, ordinarily humane and pliable but now cold and set in purpose and true to the maternal strain, led his people in battle. In this splendid creature Claiborne met a foe not to be contemned.

The Creeks had done everything possible to make the Holy Ground impregnable, but not even the fearless and daring Weatherford himself, whose personality fascinated them as no other, nor all the enchantments and sorceries of the Prophet Francis could save the stronghold from destruction. Actuated, if not by some premonition of danger which they scorned to admit, by a purpose well worthy of comment, they had removed their women and children to a place of safety across the river in a secluded, densely wooded covert. The place should, in connection with the Holy Ground, be marked by the patriotic societies of Alabama as a witness that even the savage is not unmindful of the safety and security of the object of his love.

As Claiborne's troops poured into the town along the left bank of the river, the center column under Colonel Carson curving outward like a crescent, each face, hard and set, was filled with a purpose that could not be mistaken. For days they had marched through mud and water covering the flat, pine marshes while the bitter winds of late December chilled their half-clad bodies to the bone, but they did not flinch at the sound of the wild, demoniacal clamor of the savages within the town preparing for battle. Amid a frenzied outburst of shouts and yells and

beating of drums, the Creek warriors rushed out to meet the Americans, while smaller detachments from covert and ambuscade everywhere sprang forward and poured a free discharge of rifle balls into Carson's advancing ranks.¹ From the heavy log breastworks Indian gunmen continued to fire. These were more to be dreaded than those armed with bow and arrow, whose misdirected missiles fell harmlessly into the ranks of Carson's companies in spite of the fierce and urgent commands of the sorcerers and prophets in their midst. The Creek seers and oracles have been described as rushing about frantically, uttering piercing screams, while madly waving in each hand a cow's tail dyed a brilliant scarlet. Retiring suddenly behind some wall or structure, as if to work a spell, they would suddenly rush to the open to urge with renewed vehemence their people to withstand the foe. It was, however, for their entire nation as well as for the Holy City, for which the Indians now fought, and not until the galling fire from Claiborne's men had begun to decimate their ranks did they relax their efforts. Not even then did they suddenly fall back, but slowly, stubbornly, fighting desperately with their poor weapons at every turn and twist of the bat-

¹ Weatherford knew the Creek manner of fighting and did not try to restrain the noise in their preparation for battle though he himself was not given to savage customs.

tle. Again and again they rushed forward to thrust the invader from the sacred stronghold, finally to waver and fall back as the American rifles were solidly turned on them, not only by Carson's men but by Claiborne's entire army, every column of which was now pressing into the town. Still the Indians rallied and resisted the foe.

As the Creeks advanced with a last sudden fury, Carson let his men go and soon all that was left of the pomp and glory of the haughty Red Sticks had vanished. From the fierce charge they turned in dismay, Claiborne's whole army pursuing and driving them through the town and out by the river. In utter confusion they fled without a backward glance from their wilderness sanctuary whose temples had been cast down and whose streets were red with—as we view it—merely the blood of heathen prophets.

Weatherford was the last of the defeated host to quit the battlefield. While his warriors were fleeing in confusion, seeking the canebrake and deep woods, he lingered proudly to cast a look of scorn at his assailants. Turning, he instantly mounted his fleet-footed horse and disappeared from view. Major Dreisback in a report of the affair gives a glowing picture full of color and action of Weatherford's leap into the Ala-

bama on his faithful warhorse "Arrow," as he quitted the invaded and reduced Creek capital.¹ Describing the daring leap, which could well have served for an incident in a thrilling romance of Scott, he says:

"When Weatherford found that most of his warriors had deserted him, he thought of his own safety. Finding himself hedged in above and below on the river, he determined to cross the Alabama. He was mounted on a horse of almost matchless strength and fleetness and with the swiftness of the wind turned down a long hollow that led to the bank of the river; on his arrival he found the bluff about twelve feet high; he took in at a glance the situation and determined to make the leap. He rode back about thirty paces and turned his horse's head towards the bluff, and then, with touch of the spur and the sharp 'ho ya' of his voice, he put the noble animal to the top of his speed and dashed over the bluff full twenty feet into the flashing waters below, which opened its bosom to receive the dauntless hero, who sought its sparkling waves as a barrier between him and the pursuing foe. He did not lose his seat; his horse and the lower part of his own body went entirely under the water, he holding his rifle high above his head. The gallant horse struck out for the opposite shore with his fearless rider upon

¹ Woodward is skeptical of this account of Weatherford's departure from the Holy Ground, though Major J. D. Dreisback's account has been sustained by several local historians, Halbert and Ball being inclined to agree with them.

his back. When he had advanced some thirty yards from the shore, the balls from the guns of the troopers who were above and below him began to spatter around him like hail, but it appeared that the 'Great Spirit' watched over him, for not a shot struck either man or horse. As soon as he reached the farther shore he dismounted and took off his saddle and examined his brave and noble horse to see if he had been struck. One shot had cut off a bunch or lock of the horse's mane just in front of the saddle. Finding his noble 'Arrow' unhurt, he resaddled him and mounted, and sending back a note of defiance, rode off, to fight again on other ensanguined fields."

When Claiborne had conquered the Holy Ground and had driven out its inhabitants—both prophet and warrior—he occupied it with his soldiers for a few hours during which the Choc-taws under Pushmataha were given the privilege of sacking the place and possessing themselves of the victor's spoils, the white soldiery, embittered by memories of Creek atrocities, disdaining to appropriate to themselves anything that had belonged to the savages. Their passing disdain turned into horror and bitter invective when they discovered in the public square of the conquered town a tall pine pole from which were suspended scalps of those who had been murdered at Fort Mims. From this gruesome object hung the

sunny curls of the infant with its mother's long braids, both intermingling with the hoary locks of the aged. The letter, too, found in Weatherford's house, in which Governor Manrique of Pensacola congratulated him upon the victory of Fort Mims, filled them with renewed purpose to stamp out the Creek Nation.

After ordering the torch to be applied to the town and reducing it to ashes, Claiborne with his army swept the whole territory in which the Holy Ground was located, destroying all towns, villages, farms and boats that were to be found.

With his forces pursuing and laying waste the country, the Indians began losing strength. Some of the fairest possessions of the Nation were now in ruins. But even with their hopes shattered and their imperial strength ebbing, they still, though rarely themselves taking the initiative, fought desperately in defense of their lives and strongholds. While they continued to the last to fight with spirit and at times with the greatest valor, their champion, Weatherford, must have realized that he was the leader of a lost cause, since, according to some of the best authorities, including Halbert, a student of the Creek War, he never after the destruction of the Holy Ground appeared on the battlefield.

Writing of the victory J. F. H. Claiborne says:

"The moral effect of this bold movement into the heart of the nation upon ground held sacred and impregnable, was great. It taught the savages that they were neither inaccessible nor invulnerable; it destroyed their confidence in their prophets, and it proved what volunteers, even without shoes, clothing, blankets, or provisions would do for their country."

The news of the fall of the capital of the Creek Nation instantly spread all over the country, from house to house and town to town; in camp and in assembly halls Claiborne's victory was applauded and celebrated. Bonfires flamed along the whole eastern frontier and public meetings in Natchez and other towns of the Mississippi Territory commemorated the triumph. Not even the great Jackson had won so distinctive a victory, nor had he, as yet, met Weatherford anywhere on the battlefield. The signal victory of Holy Ground, however, was not to be without its sacrifice. The men were returning home by way of Camp Vernon in a pitiable condition, half naked, barefooted and hungry, to face famine because of the failure of crops. On Christmas Day they with their beloved General dined on parched corn and boiled acorns. He was coming back with them broken in health from exposure, and suffering from a wound from which he never recovered. On

January 14, 1814, he had written from Camp Mount Vernon:

“My volunteers are returning to their homes with eight months’ pay due them and almost literally naked. They have served the last three months of inclement winter weather without shoes or blankets, almost without shirts, but are still devoted to their country and properly impressed with the justice and the necessity of the war.”

Claiborne’s men had served their full term of enlistment and had reënlisted for the expedition into the Creek country and the battle of Holy Ground. They were wasted, foot-sore and battle scarred, some of them having been away from their homes since July, 1813, and he regarded it as unjust to urge them to serve longer. A few of his men joined the 3rd Regiment commanded by Colonel Russell, but the main body of veterans returned to their homes. It was about this time that Colonel Russell who had not shared as largely as he had perhaps wished in the victory of Holy Ground proposed another expedition into the Creek country with General Flournoy’s consent and approbation. The expedition was badly planned; the party with the supplies and army equipment going by the water route lost their way and failed to connect with the soldiery. In

consequence much suffering was endured by the troops, the whole expedition proving a dismal failure. The correspondence relative to the expedition was very voluminous, much of which has been preserved. Russell's critical attitude towards Claiborne after the battle of Holy Ground is quite in contrast with the nobility and generosity of Claiborne's nature, in which censure of any brother officer found so small a place.

CHAPTER XVI

JACKSON REDUCES THE CREEK NATION

LARGER dangers than the trouble with the Indians were now looming up before the young American Republic in this quarter. Jackson's last expedition against them was only a prelude to his coast campaign against Great Britain, whose agents had been for many months giving encouragement and aid to the Creeks as a preliminary of their own design. Viewed from any standpoint Jackson's presence in the Mississippi Territory was providential at this crisis of the American government. Had New Orleans been captured by the British, which would have been certain had he not been present, the entire southern coast, irrespective of any treaty, would have temporarily at least become a British possession.

General Jackson having to his credit a number of brilliant exploits during the autumn of 1813, with a small army remained on the battle front and continued to make war on the Indians.¹ The Tennessee militia and volunteers, who had exchanged places in mending each other's patriot-

¹It was at this time, when his men had nearly all returned home, that he employed in his service a number of Cherokees, also a large party of Creeks who had opposed the war. Colonel

ism, now finally yielded to one strong impulse and mutinied outright. For the time being the skies looked dark, and to add further complications to the situation Governor Blount of Tennessee advised Jackson to abandon the campaign altogether. It was about this time that he again made his famous declaration that he would never give up his "advance."

To estimate the situation fairly, it might be well here to give a statement of the Tennessee troops.

"STATEMENT OF CERTAIN TENNESSEE VOLUNTEERS WHO SERVED UNDER GENERAL JACKSON IN THE CREEK WAR.

"ON the tenth of December, eighteen hundred and twelve, the Volunteers, in pursuance of orders from General Jackson, rendezvoused at Nashville, and were mustered into the service of the United States, by Robert Hays, muster master or inspector of the division, under whose direction and inspection, muster rolls were made out, designating the date of enrollment or enlistment, tenth of December, eighteen hundred and twelve, with the date at which their term of service would expire, tenth of December, eighteen hundred and thirteen. Copies of these rolls were furnished the inspectors and paymasters, and recorded in the

Perkins' troops continued to be subject to his control, as were several companies of Colonel Nixon's regiment. Mississippi troops were still guarding the frontiers of the Southern District and were never removed, until the heavier war clouds gathered around New Orleans.

company books of each captain. The acts of Congress of February sixth, eighteen hundred and twelve, authorizing the President to accept of fifty thousand volunteers, (of which these constituted a part,) after prescribing the mode of tender, acceptance, etc., provides that if they shall be called into actual service, they shall be bound to continue in service twelve months from the time they shall have arrived at the place of rendezvous, unless sooner discharged. From the provision in that law, it was believed by the whole detachment that they could not be kept in service beyond the time limited by the muster rolls, the only written evidence of their engagement with government. Under these impressions the volunteers descended the Mississippi, and arrived at Washington, at which place they were stationed until about the fifteenth of March, eighteen hundred and thirteen, when the General communicated to them an order said by him to have been just then received from the War Department, of which the following is (in substance) a copy:

“ ‘WAR DEPARTMENT, 15th January, 1813.

“ ‘The purposes for embodying and marching to New Orleans the troops under your command having ceased to exist, you will, on the receipt of this letter, dismiss them from public service and take measures for delivering over every article of public property in your possession to Major General Wilkinson.

“ ‘JOHN ARMSTRONG.’

"The General, for certain reasons, did not literally obey this order, but marched the detachment back to that section of the country from which they had been taken, and after having them regularly mustered out of service, gave to each non-commissioned officer and private a certificate in the following words:

" 'I certify that A. B. enrolled himself as a volunteer under the acts of Congress of February sixth and July sixth, eighteen hundred and twelve, and has served as such under my command, on a tour to the Natchez country, from the tenth of December, eighteen hundred and twelve, until the twentieth of April, eighteen hundred and thirteen, and is hereby discharged.

" 'ANDREW JACKSON, Major General.'

"Thus the volunteers thought themselves absolved from the obligation they had come under by their tender. This opinion was supported by the fact, that the arms which they had received from the government as a reward for their patriotism, they were permitted to carry with them without any injunction not to part from them; and if further evidence had been necessary to satisfy them of the validity of that certificate, as a complete discharge, the General's declarations on that day were conclusive, to wit: 'The discharge was good and complete.'

"In this belief the men returned to their respective homes, not expecting again to be called on in virtue of their former tender. In September a

campaign against the Creek Indians was determined on, and the volunteers ordered again to take the field. Whether this order originated in Nashville or in Washington city, is a question worthy of consideration. In this they were told they owed further service pursuant to their former tender. They were also told, that the Secretary of War had informed General Jackson that they were not discharged, because the power of discharging was not vested in him, nor had, as he believes, the President that power, until the term of service expired. Notwithstanding all this, there was a disinclination to obey the order of the General, not only on account of the sacrifice of personal consideration, but because they had been once discharged, and an attempt to bring them into service again under their former tender, was an abuse of their rights. A circumstance, however, which had taken place before the issuance of this order, had the greatest influence in bringing the volunteers to the belief that they owed further service. When a committee, composed of volunteer officers and others, met at Nashville in September last for the purpose of devising the most speedy and effectual means of affording aid to the settlers on Mobile and Tombigbee, a sub-committee was appointed to wait on General Jackson (then confined in his bed in town) for the purpose of obtaining his opinion on some particular points touching their deliberations. In the course of the conversation, a campaign against the Creek Indians was spoken of

as the most effectual way of defending those settlements, and at the same time the United States Volunteers were named as a desirable force, on which a question arose as to the legality of calling them out, they having been discharged from public service by the proper authority. The General replied to this, that the Secretary at War had settled that question, and produced a letter purporting to have been received from Mr. Campbell, in Congress, stating the Secretary at War had said the volunteers were not discharged, and that neither he nor the President had the power of discharging. To this the General added, that if they had not been discharged, they were still in service and entitled to pay for the whole time. This opinion of the General was circulated with great industry by all the officers, several of whom were present, and prevailed on the men to relinquish the idea of having been legally discharged, and to adopt that of being bound for further service. This latter opinion was the more readily adopted when it was recollected that the acts under which they had engaged placed them under the same rules and regulations which governed regular troops. The men now began to inquire at what time they would be entitled to a discharge, and from a view of the laws under which they engaged, and the muster rolls, no other conclusion could be drawn but that they would be entitled to a discharge on the tenth of December, eighteen hundred and thirteen. From these considerations, and with assurances from

their officers that they would not, by any fair construction of the law, be kept longer than that time, the men were generally induced to enter the field. Taken at this surprise, and precipitated from their homes with only two or three days' notice, they were badly provided for a long winter campaign.

"As the tenth of December approached, they began to speak of being discharged on that day, not in secret as men about to mutiny would do, but publicly, as an indubitable right. This was communicated officially to the General, who replied (in substance) that the claim was founded in error; that they had engaged to serve one complete year, and denied ever having discharged them; that that year would not be completed for four or five months to come, and until it was he could not discharge them, without express authority from the President; that he had written to the Governor of Tennessee for permission to discharge them; that if he would even hint at such permission, he would obey it as a command; that so soon as Colonel Carroll arrived with reinforcements, soon expected (if the Governor should not have power to discharge,) he would permit those who were discontented to return home, and concluded by declaring that if they attempted to leave the camp it should be at the hazard of their lives. In vain they represented the time and manner of their engagement, their discharge in April last, their unexpected and sudden call to the field, their naked situation, the

deranged condition of their domestic affairs, owing to their absence from home during the last campaign, and, last of all, they claimed to be discharged as their right. The General was reminded of what he had said on the validity of their discharges at Columbia. To this he replied with extreme intemperance, and the more they urged their claim, the more violence was opposed to it, until the night of the ninth December presented a scene to be remembered only with horror and indignation. The men quietly in their camps between eight and nine o'clock, P. M., were ordered to form in front of the fort for the purpose of being disarmed by the militia. After being formed, they were insultingly charged by the General with mutiny, desertion, and many other opprobrious expressions; he concluded by saying that the flash of the cannon should be the signal of their destruction. It was denied that the troops were in a state of mutiny; they only asked an indulgence of their rights. At this time the militia were in front of the line, for the purpose of disarming the volunteers, the cannon loaded, manned, and stationed, under the immediate direction of the General, so as to rake the line, and other arrangements made to carry on the work of death. After the General had disgorged his rage, he proposed their awaiting the arrival of Major Searcy or Colonel Carroll, as before mentioned; this was assented to, and the brigade dismissed. On the thirteenth, the General addressed the volunteers in a manner calculated to

insult and wound their feelings, and immediately issued an order to General Hall, commanding him to march the brigade to Nashville, and there await the orders of Governor Blount and the President of the United States. On the fourteenth the line of march was taken up, and on the twenty-fifth they arrived at Fayetteville, where, by the advice of the Governor, they were dismissed until further orders.

“During the dispute between the volunteers and the General, *they* behaved with their usual subordination and decorum, having determined not to disperse without an honorable discharge. They contended for this with a respectful firmness, not shaken by boisterous threats. Many of the officers advised the General to use conciliatory measures. They believed that although the men never would relinquish their right to be discharged, yet by proper management the services of a great part might be continued. This advice was treated as an idle tale, and none but coercive measures resorted to. Under these circumstances the men felt as might be expected when they were denied, by the arm of military power, the exercise of a right guaranteed by the laws and Constitution of the country, and traduced for modestly and respectfully asking the indulgence of that right, they could but feel the indignation to be expected from freemen. They felt mortified at leaving the service under existing circumstances, but a choice of evils only being left them, either to go off in the manner proposed, or passively

submit to an unqualified abuse of their best rights, they preferred the former, believing that the example of the latter, when once set, would gain strength with the use, and be difficult to correct.

“WM. HALL, Brig. Gen. T. V.

“E. BRADLEY, C. C. 1st R. T. V.

“S. D. LAUDERDALE, Lt. C. T. V.

“WM. MARTIN, Lt. C. 2d R. T. V.

“W. L. ALEXANDER, Maj. 1st R. T. V.

“H. L. DOUGLASS, Capt. 1st R. T. V.

and Aid-de-camp.

“D. HUMPHREYS, Brigade Major

“R. ALEXANDER, Brig. Q. Master

“GALLATIN, March 4, 1814.”

This memorial explains the position of the Tennessee troops, though the matter was ignored as of little importance by Jackson, who sometimes proceeded on the theory that circumstances alter cases. The shrewd and indomitable soldier holding steadily to his one main purpose continued to clear his path of all obstacles. He pursued and harried the Creeks through forest and over water, in nearly every encounter overwhelming and punishing them severely. The various collisions and skirmishes that occurred between the Americans and Weatherford's party after Jackson invaded their country in the spring of 1814 have been briefly sketched, not that they bear on or answer the main question involved, but simply in

order to follow the path of war to Pensacola, where the British, with a great naval force gathering in the south seas, were anxiously watching the termination of the Creek uprising. Following the hard fighting near Emuckfaw Creek,¹ where the Indians made an all day but vain attack on the invading American forces, and the fierce encounter at the Hillabee village of Enitachopoco,² where they continued their efforts to drive Jackson and his army out of the Creek country, both sides prepared for what proved to be the final battle between the two warring nations. The Enitachopoco fight must have elated and given the Indians some satisfaction since it was here that they proudly boasted that they "ran Captain Jackson into the Coosa River," a dilemma humorously admitted later by the Americans.

The conclusive battle then of Tohopeka, or Horseshoe Bend, which occurred March 27, 1814, had yet to be fought, some authorities think, before the proud Weatherford would replace the red plume in his head-dress with a white one. Slight victories in the Callabee swamps and especially the victory over Floyd during the month of January had heartened the Indians, and with

¹ Jackson, with his usual contempt for nonessentials, called this stream "Muckfaw."

² Sometimes spelled Enothchopco.

high hope of driving the Americans out of their country they gathered in full force to meet Jackson on the Tallapoosa. During the winter he had been left at times with but a straggling army with which to meet the foe. In February he was amply reinforced by fresh and ardent troops from Tennessee. Many volunteers from the Mississippi Territory seeking adventure under the now famous Indian fighter joined his ranks, fascinated by the man who had set himself a task the accomplishment of which required that the Creek Indians must be practically exterminated, or at least their battle spirit wholly extinguished. General Pinckney in command of the Northern District relied on him implicitly and, absent in the Carolinas and later on in Georgia, left the direction of the campaign principally to his judgment.

The Coosa River, notwithstanding a visible spirit of mutiny which the presence of the regulars helped to allay, was the scene of stirring military action throughout the month of March, a large number of troops camping on or near its banks. When drilling and especially when on parade, with the regulars clad in uniform, the army made an imposing spectacle in the heart of the bare, gray wilderness. It was about this time that still another force from Tennessee made its way to the Mississippi Territory for the purpose

of aiding Jackson in his last effort to break the remaining strength of the Red Sticks, whose late stubborn resistance and brilliant exploits had surprised and embarrassed the Americans. Nettled by the Indians' triumphant boasts, Jackson's army was daily augmented by volunteer troops and he soon found himself at the head of a large force well supplied and ready not only to go against the Creeks but to move at any time on the British lurking about Pensacola.

A youth, John Wood, acting as substitute for his brother, was executed for mutiny, or what seems rather to have been nothing more than insubordination, by Jackson's orders about this time. The whole happening with its attendant circumstances gives one an impression of utter lack of self-control on his part when driven to extremities. Something of this spirit was manifested during his defense of New Orleans though he mixed with it a great deal of diplomacy. Still the circumstances at times were such that any military leader with a great object in view might have resorted to severe measures. Had Lee's or Grant's army constantly displayed a spirit of mutiny, it is not logical to think that either would have tamely submitted to it.¹

¹As early as the 20th of September six militiamen had been sent to Mobile and imprisoned there to await trial for mutiny. Their execution after the battle of New Orleans does Jackson no credit.

For their last stand the Creeks had chosen a place they called "Tohopeka," which occupied a peninsula containing about one hundred acres in the bend of the lovely Tallapoosa. It was also called in their own wild, sweet tongue "Cholocco Litabixbee"—the Horseshoe—on account of its shape. The stronghold was prepared and defended in such a manner that the Indians thought it could be easily evacuated when no longer deemed secure. Pickett observes that it "was admirably adapted by Nature for security if well guarded but equally for destruction if not well defended." Safe within their peninsula fastness, which had been fortified by a strong breastwork constructed of heavy logs across the neck of land connecting it with the mainland, they determined to defend it at every cost, and if failing, to escape with their women and children by way of the river where hundreds of large canoes had been moored for that purpose near the town proper. It was blustering March weather but the trees were budding into leaf and a variety of early spring flowers were in bloom along the Tallapoosa Bend when Jackson appeared before the town. The Indians were ready for his approach. The Hillabee warriors led the defense and were bitter in retaliation for the cruel manner in which Generals Cocke and White had ignored

their proposals of surrender, a misunderstanding for which Jackson was now to suffer. With the Hillabees were the warriors of the following towns: Oakfuskie, Oakchoie, New Yanca, the Fish Pond, Hickory Ground and Eufaulahatchem, numbering about one thousand. Weatherford was not present, yet it cannot be doubted that his faithful warriors and prophets among whom was Manohwee, the most renowned of all, had been fully instructed by him as to the course to pursue.

With the exception of the massive log breast-work erected with both British and Spanish aid General Jackson regarded the Muscogee defenses, though artfully planned from the standpoint of the Creeks, as little better than the work of children. On examining them he exclaimed regretfully, "They have penned themselves up for slaughter!" Conscious of the fate that awaited them he immediately sent a flag of truce toward the town but the proud Hillabees with an outburst of scornful hoots and yells instantly fired upon it. The Americans, no longer hesitating, prepared for battle. General Coffee, now an able, well-known officer in the war with the Creeks, crossed the Tallapoosa and stationed his troops so as to have a full sweep at the peninsula, an astute design well executed, which the Red Sticks

were not expecting. With Coffee's troops in position, Jackson pressed hard against the breastworks and with two pieces of cannon began fiercely to bombard the Creek fortress. But it was only after a number of sharp advances and pounding of guns that he could in any wise weaken the fortifications. For several hours he stormed the breastworks to be repulsed again and again. More than once Jackson, Coffee, Russell, Morgan and many others commanding the American forces recoiled at the furious resistance offered by the enemy before the town was captured. The gallant Tennesseans mounted and strove upon the breastworks only to dye them with American blood. But finally a number of the advance guard, led by the brave Major Montgomery and Lieutenants Moulton and Somerville, who fell in the attempt, gained an entrance into the town. Their place was taken by Ensign Sam Houston of Tennessee, years later the governor of Texas, who, though wounded, led the way into the town. General Coffee had destroyed the canoes on the river and set fire to the place, which was soon a sheet of flame. Seeing the pitiable plight of the Indians, wedged in between his own forces and Coffee's, with the town each moment becoming a furnace, Jackson again dispatched a

messenger to assure them of American favor if they would surrender. Once more the proud Muscogees disdained his overtures and amid yells of derision and a discharge of fire-arms proclaimed that they had no confidence in the palefaces who had broken faith with them. The Indians, though sorely beset on all sides, asked for no quarter but went to their death with as sublime heroism as was ever shown by the Caucasian on any battle-field where life was the price to be paid for liberty. When once the Americans had gained an entrance into the encampment both sides fought valiantly, the bayonet in the white man's hands in the end proving too much for the gallant bowmen who, too proud to sue for quarter, scattered in confusion, fleeing in every direction through the swamps, over sloughs and bayous and across the river, leaving only a trail of blood to mark the course of their flight. The rifle and bayonet in the hands of the Americans had done their worst; the peninsula was literally strewn with the dead bodies of Creek warriors; but it took, Brewer says in his history of Alabama, "the combined power of the whites, the Cherokees, Chickasaws and Choctaws, assisted by a large party of their own people, to subjugate them." It was now that the haughty fighting spirit of the Muscogee was, with the exception of several futile efforts with

the British, wholly extinguished. But not until the Valkyrie had borne to the Hall of Odin some hero like the great Manowa who, to all dwellers there, would embody the spirit of the Creek, did this powerful Indian nation yield to its fate.¹

The evening shadows had enveloped the land when the battle of Tallapoosa Bend came to a close and the flames that destroyed the fortress had died down to embers. The Horseshoe was a heap of ashes; the mighty Red Sticks were no more; and their last stronghold had become their burial ground, not more than twenty, says Jackson, in exaggeration, having escaped. Now ready to surrender on any terms, they crept from hiding-place and covert throughout the nation and bent their proud necks to the domination of the white race whose will had proved too strong for theirs. And though they continued foes to the American, in only a very few instances did they offer further resistance.

Some historians denounce this last battle as a massacre—a riot of butchery equal to Fort Mims. Whether this be true or not, it is evident that Jackson, though humane himself in victory, was on this occasion unable to restrain his troops. Some of these, forgetting that a brave people had

¹ Manohwee (sometimes spelled Manowa), commander of the Creeks at Tohopeka. He was not slain in battle but lived for a number of years with his body covered with wounds.

died for their homes and native country and, while recoiling in horror and disgust from the savage practice of scalping a foe, nevertheless driven on by hate and revenge, had no hesitation in cutting the nose from the faces of the dead warriors as they covered, like a winding-sheet, the sacred soil of their fathers.

In the defense of Horseshoe Bend the Creeks numbered about 1,000. Historians disagree about the number that escaped and also about the number engaged in battle. Pickett thinks that as many as 200 escaped, while he places the army's strength at 1,000. The Indians, in nearly every instance, had proved to be poor marksmen and Jackson lost only 32 men, 99 having been wounded. Among the dead were several brave spirits who had been close to their fiery-hearted and devoted commander and it was in keeping with his fervent and loyal nature to pour out his grief in passionate lament over the loss of the heroic young Virginian, Major L. P. Montgomery, of the 39th Regiment, who was the first to mount the breastworks at Tallapoosa Bend to fall with sword in hand while urging his men to take the stronghold. His dead body drew from the stern soldier the tribute of tears as he, with romantic fervor that calls to mind King Arthur,

pronounced him "the flower" of all his brave army.¹

The bloody battle of the Horseshoe having become a thing of yesterday, General Jackson left the Tallapoosa and placed his army in line of march and on April 2, found himself at Fort Williams, a fort that he had erected on his march thither. Here he supplied and rested his army, but when joined by the Georgia militia on the 15th he moved against the towns on the lower Tallapoosa to find them wholly undefended and for the most part deserted by both warrior and prophet.

Jackson under General Pinckney's orders again returned to Fort Williams where he had left a garrison. From this point his army moved forward with such provisions as the men could carry, the constant rains making it impossible to transport heavy supplies through the rough wilderness. The terrified Creeks fled before his march in every direction, many stopping on the roadside to surrender, others making their way to Pensacola to join the British and some going into Florida. Jackson in victory was neither revenge-

¹ Major Lemuel Purnell Montgomery was a native of Wythe County, Virginia, and was descended from patriotic Revolutionary ancestors. His biographer states that the county of Montgomery, Alabama, was named in honor of him while the capital of the State preserves in its name the memory of his father General Montgomery who fell at the storming of Quebec.

ful nor vindictive and the Indians found in their adversary one who, while he had slight faith in their integrity, was ready in every instance to sympathize with them in misfortune. Their appeals for succor and aid now touched him, and their wretched condition was relieved in every possible manner. He was pardonably elated over his success in reducing the Creek Nation and was profuse in praise of his troops. If the jealousy and lack of coöperation evinced by Colonel Milton commanding the eastern troops with several Carolina companies at Decatur across the Tallapoosa annoyed him, and General Cocke's attitude had given him much concern, his victory fully compensated for any want of appreciation or petty clashes incident to his campaign. His fame as an Indian fighter was secure. Tennessee regarded him as her most renowned soldier and eagerly set about to furnish troops for his future expeditions. Governor Holmes of the Mississippi Territory and General Ferdinand L. Claiborne had always regarded him as one worthy of all esteem and confidence and their admiration for him as a soldier was no less ardent than that which characterized the entire soldiery of the Mississippi Territory who were now ready to follow him to any point designated to meet the British. By the Creek Indians whom he had con-

quered and almost destroyed as a nation he was regarded as some strange and great being endowed with supernatural power.

Not only Jackson but his entire army won fame in the Creek war and Governor Holmes in a letter to Governor Blount generously wrote as follows respecting the aid of the Tennessee troops:

"The conduct of the State of Tennessee upon every occasion when our Territory has been menaced by an enemy, entitles that member of the Union to our peculiar gratitude; but the patriotism evinced by their statesmen, soldiers, and citizens, upon the late occasion of the disasters which happened on the Eastern frontier, exhibited a magnanimity of character and a national sensibility, worthy of being emulated by all who justly estimate that pride of Country so essential to the maintenance of those rights which the Constitution of the United States was intended to secure and to perpetuate.

"From their armies now acting against the enemy, we have every thing to expect that distinguished talents, courage, a love of country and a laudable desire for fame and honor can promise."

CHAPTER XVII

CREEKS SURRENDER AND LATER MAKE A TREATY
WITH THE AMERICANS, AUGUST 9, 1814

THE British still hoped to enlist the Creeks in their service and did to some extent use them as land forces, but the peace party in the Creek Nation was greatly strengthened by Jackson's victory, many of them becoming open adherents of the American cause. As a preliminary for the coast operations against the British the victory proved a valuable factor in shaping and strengthening that campaign.

Jackson proved by his whole Creek campaign that he was not willing to run any risks. He felt that the only way to prevent the Indians from giving aid to the British was to break their strength completely and to render them helpless in warfare. He foresaw the storm gathering on the Southern Coast, and not as long as the British hovered about Pensacola and Mobile did he believe that the American Republic in this section was safe. Several small expeditions against the Creeks were planned and carried out even after

the battle of Tohopeka which snuffed out the last ray of hope in their breasts, if any such spark still flickered there.

Before leaving the Tallapoosa country which had now become historic, Jackson, who, though usually of a practical trend of mind, possessed a deep rich undercurrent of fine sentiment, displayed his strong patriotism and nationalism in the following pleasing manner: On striking camp he took occasion to plant the American colors on the spot where a century before, under the orders of Cadillac, had been erected Fort Toulouse,¹ when the French were in possession of the country.

The old French post became the site of the new fort erected with a strong block house and outer walls. The fort received the name Jackson, and it was here that large deputations of Creek warriors came constantly to make formal surrender.²

Weatherford, daring and utterly fearless, and handsome after the manner of the half-breed, was the most conspicuous figure, next to Jackson, at the fort. Though a Creek in every instinct and aspiration, he affected little of the manners and

¹This fort was on the Coosa four miles above its junction with the Tallapoosa.

²Peter McQueen, next to Weatherford in prominence, had fled with many warriors to Florida.

customs of his people. His dress, of the pioneer variety and fashion, had none of the barbaric adornment characteristic of Indian customs a style in which he has been painted. But no warrior among them, not even a prophet, though he might perform miracles, could so utterly sway the hearts of the Red Sticks as the tall Red Eagle, whose haughty bearing, set off with wild, free grace, and eloquent speech held for them a charm acknowledged for few others. With inconceivable daring he suddenly appeared at the fort on a splendid charger, a deer killed on the way swung across his saddle. General Jackson, while regarding him as the evil genius of the war and had ordered his capture on sight, was in the end completely charmed with his romantic appearance and magnetic personality. Though furious at this bold appearance before "his very *marquee*," the rough American general, whose whole life constantly reveals the fact that he was not without keen appreciation of the pure romanticism of all high exploit and adventure, instantly acknowledged the superb courage of the man whose scorn of risk and danger had won for him a soldier's protection.

Many of the more peaceful, or as the case might be, timorous, Creek warriors both feared and hated the haughty half-breed, and it was with a spirit of childish exultation and revenge that Big

Warrior,¹ high in the graces of General Jackson as he now thought himself, forecast the doom of the Red Eagle. "We've got you now, Bill Weatherford!" coming from such a source stung the haughty half-breed as no word of condemnation from Jackson could have done. He, however, concerned with weightier matters, cast a look of scorn upon the traitor, as he termed him, and turned to confront his conqueror. Eyewitnesses aver that he faced Jackson with perfect composure, proudly calling himself a Creek warrior and telling him that were it possible, he would continue to make war upon him. His speech was full of fair-spoken words and worthy appeals. He asked for naught for himself but what they chose to deal him, but for the helpless Creek women and children he craved assistance and protection. Having now aroused Jackson's sympathy, he received the benefit that is often conferred on defenders of noble aims and purposes even though these themselves be insincere in their design. He had struck a chord keenly alive in the great, strong heart of Jackson. With secret elation the shrewd Weatherford saw the stern features of his adversary relax. He knew that, though the rank and file were clamoring for his

¹ The same chieftain who refused to unite with Tecumseh to aid the British.

instant death, he had charmed his great foe, a man whose remarkable tendency toward acts of hard-heartedness and of soft-heartedness had always been equally characteristic.

Weatherford's presentation to the General of the deer he had slain and a glass of brandy offered in return by Jackson concluded the hospitality of the fort. With a look of "By the Eternal!" darkening his worn, sallow face, he signified that none present should harm a hair of Weatherford's head. In this manner the terms of surrender were concluded.

Since the aggressor must always pay the indemnities that follow failure, the lovely lands of the Coosa and Tallapoosa which now form a part of the State of Alabama passed into the hands of the American government at the treaty made by the Creeks during the following August. A short time after Jackson concluded the terms of surrender with the Indians at Fort Jackson, General Pinckney of the United States Army arrived and gave his approval to what had transpired.

On April 21, 1814, General Jackson discharged the West Tennessee troops at Camp Blount near Fayetteville with a stirring address full of praise of their loyalty, devotion and prowess. His language possessed a vital quality that charmed men, and in times of stress moved them to action.

His praise of them now was extremely pleasing. Highly dramatic in his manner and methods, his knowledge of human nature and genius for leading or, as the necessity demanded, driving men evinced a sagacity that at times seemed to savor of craft. Those about him invariably caught his enthusiasm and had faith in his purpose.

Everything now being quiet on the Southern border, so far as the Indians were concerned, Jackson, leaving the gallant and vigilant Major Blue to quell any local disturbance that might arise during his absence, returned for a short while to the "Hermitage." The Indians in all probability would have retired to their own towns thoroughly subdued but for their British and Spanish sympathizers on the coast. While the British could expect little in the way of assistance in the future from the Creek Nation it continued to be their policy to keep hostilities alive between the Indians and the Americans and more than once, as has been stated, they uniformed and equipped them as field forces in their coast campaign against the American Republic.¹ Appeals of runners sent into the Creek Nation led many

¹ Gayarre says of the Creeks at Pensacola, that they "openly wore the British uniform in the streets in violation of the laws of neutrality which Spain was bound to observe." They were promised a reward of ten dollars for every American scalp taken, irrespective of age or sex.

destitute and starving Red Sticks to join the British with the hope of receiving protection and assistance. The Indians were in a pitiable condition throughout the Nation and besides the assistance afforded them by the British, Americans at several places were feeding as many as 5,000 at a time.

While resting from his arduous campaign against the Indians, General Jackson was promoted major-general of the army and empowered to conclude a treaty of peace with the Indians by the Federal Government. Having repaired to Fort Jackson with a small escort, he immediately assumed command of the 7th Military District, and in obedience to orders set about to make a treaty of peace with the Creeks. In peaceful surroundings where love and its gentle ministrations cooled for a short while the white heat of his ambition, his health had slightly improved, but it continued poor throughout his Southern campaign.

During the treaty concluded August 9, 1814, despite Big Warrior's protestations of friendship and his liberality in bestowing certain small gifts of land on all distinguished persons present, the Indians manifested their usual opposition to the surrender of their native lands, an opposition led by Big Warrior himself whenever large areas

were demanded. After much explanation followed by a peremptory demand on the part of Jackson, and the threat that he would send them to Florida if they continued to refuse, the Indians were finally induced to sign the treaty. Among the distinguished personages present with Jackson were Colonel Hawkins and Colonel Arthur P. Hayne.¹

The day the treaty was signed was auspicious in the governmental affairs of the American Republic but it had another more far reaching significance. Where the wayside shrine, a cross or other symbol of the Christ or of the Mother, had been hopefully set by the faithful Jesuit among the sun worshipers, American patriots were now preparing to erect Protestant churches.

The formal treaty with the Creek Indians is as follows:

TREATY OF FORT JACKSON

Articles of Agreement and Capitulation made and concluded this 9th day of August, 1814, between Major General Andrew Jackson, on behalf of the President of the United States of America, and the Chiefs, Deputies and Warriors of the Creek Nation.

Whereas, an unprovoked, inhuman and sanguinary war, waged by the hostile Creeks against the

¹ Colonel Hayne was a native of Charleston, South Carolina, and was descended from a family distinguished in the Revolu-

United States, hath been repelled, prosecuted and determined successfully on the part of said States, in conformity with principles of national justice and honorable warfare; and whereas, consideration is due to the rectitude of proceeding dictated by instructions relating to the reëstablishment of peace; be it remembered that, prior to the conquest of that part of the Creek nation hostile to the United States, numberless aggressions have been committed against the peace, the property and the lives of citizens of the United States, and those of the Creek nation in amity with her, at the mouth of Duck river, Fort Mims and elsewhere, contrary to national faith, and the regard due to an article of the treaty concluded at New York, in the year 1790, between the two nations; that the United States, previous to the perpetration of such outrages, did, in order to insure future amity and concord between the Creek nation and the said States, in conformity with the stipulations of former treaties, fulfill, with punctuality and good faith, her engagements to the said nation; that more than two thirds of the whole number of chiefs and warriors of the Creek nation, disregarding the genuine spirit of existing treaties, suffered themselves to be instigated to violations of their national honor, and the respect due to a part of their own nation, faithful

tionary War. He was for a while with the army in the North during the War of 1812 and was noted for his gallantry and patriotic ardor. He was one of General Jackson's most trusted officers and during the battle of New Orleans rendered service of the most valuable nature.

to the United States and the principles of humanity, by impostors denominating themselves prophets, and by the duplicity and misrepresentation of foreign emissaries, whose governments are at war, open or understood, with the United States. Wherefore,

Article 1. The United States demand an equivalent for all expenses incurred in prosecuting the war to its termination, by a cession of all the territory belonging to the Creek nation within the territories of the United States lying west, south and south-eastwardly of a line to be run and described by persons duly authorized and appointed by the President of the United States, beginning at a point on the easterly bank of the Coosa river, where the south boundary line of the Cherokee nation crosses the same; running from thence down the said Coosa river, with its eastern bank, according to its various meanders, to a point one mile above the mouth of Cedar creek, at Fort Williams, thence east two miles, thence south two, thence west, to the eastern bank of the said Coosa river, thence down the eastern bank thereof, according to its various meanders to a point opposite the upper end of the great falls (called by the natives Woetumka), thence east, from a true meridian line, to a point due north of the Oakfuskie, thence south, by a like meridian line, to the mouth of the Oakfuskie on the south side of the Tallapoosa river, thence up the same, according to its various meanders, to a point where a direct course

will cross the same, at the distance of ten miles from the mouth thereof; thence a direct line to the mouth of Summochico creek, which empties into the Chatahouchie river on the east side thereof, below the Eufaulan town; thence east, from a true meridian line, to a point which shall intersect the line now dividing the lands claimed by the said Creek nation from those claimed and owned by the State of Georgia: provided, nevertheless, that where any possession of any chief or warrior of the Creek nation, who shall have been friendly to the United States during the war, and taken an active part therein, shall be within the territory ceded by these articles to the United States, every such person shall be entitled to a reservation of land within the said territory, of one mile square, to include his improvements, as near the center thereof as may be, which shall inure to the said chief or warrior, and his descendants, so long as he or they shall continue to occupy the same, who shall be protected by and subject to the laws of the United States; but upon the voluntary abandonment thereof, by such possessor or his descendants, the right of occupancy or possession of said lands shall devolve to the United States, and be identified with the right of property ceded hereby.

Article 2. The United States will guarantee to the Creek nation the integrity of all their territory eastwardly and northwardly of the said line, to be run and described as mentioned in the first article.

Article 3. The United States demand that the Creek nation abandon all communication and cease to hold any intercourse with any British or Spanish post, garrison, or town; and that they shall not admit among them any agent or trader, who shall not derive authority to hold commercial, or other intercourse with them, by license from the President or authorized agent of the United States.

Article 4. The United States demand an acknowledgment of the right to establish military posts and trading houses and to open roads within the territory guarantied to the Creek nation by the second article, and a right to the free navigation of all its waters.

Article 5. The United States demand, that a surrender be immediately made, of all the persons and property taken from the citizens of the United States, the friendly part of the Creek nation, the Cherokee, Chickasaw, and Choctaw nations to the respective owners; and the United States will cause to be immediately restored to the formerly hostile Creeks, all property taken from them since their submission, either by the United States, or by any Indian nation in amity with the United States, together with all the prisoners taken from them during the war.

Article 6. The United States demand the caption and surrender of all the prophets and instigators of the war, whether foreigners or natives, who have not submitted to the arms of the United States, and become parties to these

articles of capitulation, if ever they shall be found within the territory guarantied to the Creek nation by the second article.

Article 7. The Creek nation being reduced to extreme want, and not at present having the means of subsistence, the United States, from motives of humanity, will continue to furnish, gratuitously, the necessaries of life until the crops of corn can be considered competent to yield the nation a supply, and will establish trading houses in the nation, at the discretion of the President of the United States, and at such places as he shall direct, to enable the nation, by industry and economy, to procure clothing.

Article 8. A permanent peace shall ensue from the date of these presents, for ever, between the Creek nation and the United States, and between the Creek nation and the Cherokee, Chickasaw, and Choctaw nations.

Article 9. If in running east from the mouth of Summochico creek, it shall so happen that the settlement of the Kinnards fall within the lines of the territory hereby ceded, then, and in that case, the line shall be run east in a true meridian, to Kitchofoonee creek, thence down the middle of said creek to its junction with Flint river, immediately below the Oakmulgee, town, thence up the middle of Flint river, to a point due east of that at which the above line struck the Kitchofoonee creek, thence east to the old line hereinbefore mentioned; to wit, the line dividing the lands claimed by the Creek nation

from those claimed and owned by the State of Georgia.

The parties to these presents, after due consideration for themselves and their constituents, agree to ratify and confirm the preceding articles, and constitute them the basis of a permanent peace between the two nations; and they do hereby solemnly bind themselves, and all the parties concerned and interested, to a faithful performance of every stipulation contained therein.¹

¹ Indian Treaties. Washington, 1826, *p.* 207.

CHAPTER XVIII

JACKSON PREPARES TO ATTACK PENSACOLA

JACKSON by this time had the supreme confidence of the Tennessee troops. He more than any other had attained military leadership in the South. The Southern soldiery everywhere began to regard him as well nigh invincible, while he in turn relied upon them implicitly. Especially to the soldiers of Tennessee he looked in the development of his future plans.

It was to Colonel Thomas Hinds also that Jackson now turned for active support in the campaign against the British at Pensacola. The physical condition of General Claiborne, an invalid confined to his home facing death in his early prime, precluded any possible chance of his longer performing military service, though his connection with the military organizations still continued as the following formations for 1814 show, the roster having been taken from the *Natchez Almanac*:

“Ferdinand Leigh Claiborne, Brigadier-General; Andrew Marschalk, Adjutant-General;

Aides-de-Camp to Governor Holmes, Joseph Sessions, Thomas Percy, John Haines, Charles K. Blanchard; John Wood, Aide-de-Camp to General Claiborne; Lieutenant-Colonels Commandant: David Neilson, 1st Regiment, Amite County; Samuel Stocket, 2d Regiment, Wilkinson County; David Fleming, 3d Regiment, Adams County; David Carradine, 4th Regiment, Jefferson County; Raymond Robinson, 5th Regiment, Claiborne County; James Caller, 6th Regiment, Washington County, now Alabama; Peter Perkins, 7th Regiment, Madison County, now Alabama; James Powell, 8th Regiment, Baldwin County, now Alabama; James Patton, 9th Regiment, Wayne County; Henry Manadere, 10th Regiment, Warren County; Robert Witherspoon, 11th Regiment, Franklin County; Josiah Skinner, 12th Regiment, Greene County; George H. Nixon, 13th Regiment, Marion County; John Hinson, 14th Regiment, Mobile County, now Alabama; Reuben Saffold, 15th Regiment, Clarke County, now Alabama; Charles Burris, 16th Regiment, Madison County, now Alabama; William Bates, 17th Regiment, Jackson County; Jordan Morgan, 18th Regiment, Hancock County."

From these regiments which conformed very nearly to the organization of 1813, had been drawn the troops for the following year. All were engaged in active and effective service of various kinds throughout the Creek uprising and were

later employed in the campaign along the coast against the British. Sometimes in local companies and even in small bands and knots or as volunteers and recruits in the regular army, they rendered good service in the defense of the Territory and the Republic. Many hundreds of Mississippi soldiers whose names have never appeared as volunteers from the Mississippi Territory assisted Jackson in various ways and at various times in his Southern campaign.

As we have seen it was during hostilities with the Creek Indians that Major Hinds had begun to attain some prominence as a soldier. His unusual capacity as an officer and his ability to lead his troops in any enterprise of daring was instantly recognized by Jackson, nor was the superior character of the Dragoons, culled from the best population of the State, lost to his observing eye. When the Mississippi Territory faced a more serious trouble than she had experienced with the Creeks, this famous troop of horse once more sprang into action and eagerly followed the fortunes of its fearless commander.

Jackson was scarcely through arranging his treaty with the Creeks when the somewhat veiled designs on the part of Great Britain and Spain became so patent that he was no longer in doubt as to the course to pursue. Persistent rumors

of military assistance and encouragement given the Indians by both the British and Spanish at Pensacola had continuously aroused his indignation. In addition he had discovered that the closest communication had been opened up between the Spanish and British and that the latter from the brig *Orpheus* had landed arms at Apalachicola. His correspondence with Governor Claiborne at New Orleans confirmed all his discoveries and he lost no time in reporting the situation to the Government at Washington. All orders from the War Department were delayed, and, whether delayed or not, from the very nature of things, authorities there were so completely out of touch with the situation that Jackson, unwilling to risk failure, assumed the initiative in moving against the Spanish capital.

The following two letters from Jackson to Governor Manrique, dated July 12 and August 14, 1814, plainly show with what he had to contend in defending the southern coast against a British invasion.¹

"SIR—

"Considerations which have relation to the duties of a responsible position induce me to address this to you.

¹ From *Mississippi Provincial Archives*, Spanish Dominion, Vol. IX, pp. 259 and 262. Original in Archives of the Indies, Seville, Cuban Papers. Translated by H. H. Knoblock, Assistant, Mississippi Department of Archives and History.

“Since my arrival here I have received advice which, if it is based on any positive fact, might occasion disagreeable consequences relative to the friendship which exists between the governments of Spain and of the United States of America based upon treaties in force. To obviate the necessity on the part of the United States of any measures hostile to the interests of Spain and at the same time to constantly have a regard for the good of my country appears to me to be a duty inseparable from my present situation. I am informed that the enemies of the United States who have killed our innocent women and children have sought and obtained a foreign asylum from justice in the territory of Spain and that they are maintained by the order of the government of Pensacola.

“Also I have received advice that our declared enemy, an officer commanding the frigate *Orpheus* of his Britannic Majesty, has been permitted to disembark within the territory of Spain twenty-five thousand guns with three hundred barrels of ammunition, with the manifest design of equipping the vanquished Creeks to renew a sanguinary war against the United States.

“I trust, Sir, that these accounts are not well founded, and I believe that the officers of the Spanish Government in Pensacola and its environs have had more respect for the *interests* of Spain and for the *rights* of the United States than to permit the violation of a neutrality so important to the American people, and you will have the

goodness to send me an immediate answer upon these points, by the bearer or by any other means. And if by chance Frances and McQueen or any other chief of the Creek Nation hostile to the United States should be found within the territory and jurisdiction of Pensacola, you will have them arrested immediately, so that they may be brought to this government to atone for the violation of the rights of humanity and of the treaties which exist between the two nations."

"SIR:

"I have had the honor (accidentally) to receive your answer to that letter which I addressed to you with the date of the 12th ultimo delivered to you by my friend Captain Gordon: I pass over in silence the motives which have occasioned your answer and I shall only observe that I see with regret the hostile and evasive warmth which pervades your whole letter, so little in harmony with the frank and high Spanish character which you have assumed. You are the Governor and I suppose also the representative of His Catholic Majesty who is openly in a state of peace, friendship, and perpetual neutrality with the United States, bound by a solemn treaty to use force in order to prevent the Indians who live in His Majesty's territory from making war and committing any depredations upon the citizens of the United States and their property, as also upon the Indians who live in their district; under these

solemn obligations you cite motives of humanity and rights of hospitality to justify yourself for having extended and practiced towards the Creeks who are at war with the United States and at peace with Spain, for having opened in a friendly manner the arms of your government to some rebel assassins and barbarous robbers, who have not only stained their hands with the blood of our innocent women and children but who have raised the exterminating hatchet against their own nation, who have been excited to these horrible acts of butchery by our declared enemy, Great Britain, and have been furnished means to continue the war by His Catholic Majesty. In view of all these facts, our Christianity would blush to take refuge under the influence of humanity and hospitality to justify ourselves. We cannot possess this refined moderation and Christian indulgence which has caused Your Excellency to blot from his memory the savage, brutal, and general slaughter of our innocent women and children at Fort Mims, Duck River, and in other places, and we cannot receive them to our fraternal bosoms without any evidence of repentance and put in their hands the means which will enable them to repeat similar acts in open violation of solemn treaties without looking forward to a day of retribution.

“I enclose to you an extract from the treaty passed between your Government and the United States in order that you may be informed of it, presuming that you must have forgotten its

existence, since you do not mention it a single time in your letter.

“Also I have the honor to inform Your Grace that the ninth of the present month a capitulation and treaty of peace was concluded between the Creek Nation and the United States, by which the Creek Nation has ceded to the United States all the lands limited by the Spanish territory, and having received advice that the bandits fled from the Creek Nation who are now in Pensacola receive daily rations from your Government, and under the direction of an English officer are preparing themselves, with your knowledge (if it is not with its knowledge), to repeat their acts of hostility against the citizens of our frontiers. I have ordered my patrols to reconnoitre the country to the north of the Spanish line and to treat all those renegades as enemies whom they take above your line, up to which you explicitly declare they are under your jurisdiction and you remain responsible for their conduct, as is stipulated by the treaty of 1795. I beg that Your Excellency will receive my infinite thanks for your liberal and unasked acknowledgment that the Apalachicola River and the territory drained by it is not claimed by the Spanish Government and that the United States are at liberty to expel their enemies who have taken possession of that part and occupy it, as likewise the territory of the Indians. The necessity of showing all due justice to my government compels me to observe to Your Excellency that if your investigations as to the

facts had been as exact as your industry has been to evade and to give such an indirect answer to my former letter, it would have furnished you the means to gain the information that Monsieur Lafitte, commander of the band of pirates, was arrested some time ago and now is being prosecuted for the enormous crimes, piracies, and complaints which there have been against him; certainly then Your Excellency ought to hold in the same position Francis, McQueen, Peter, and others who form the band of assassins for whom your Christian feelings seem to sympathize so much and act so freely.

“But to conclude, a just satisfaction in part has been taken by the United States, and if provoked another time the power always remains to take vengeance and retaliation. The power of Spain is sufficient, she ought to maintain a neutral character and is pledged with the United States to hold back the helmet and the knife; and as the head which excites its use will experience the sharpness of its blade. I am well acquainted with the head, and I know well the man who first provoked and excited the use of these savage instruments; but it is not some undefended women and children upon whom satisfaction will be taken but upon the head which favored and excited the barbarity, this is the person more responsible, and more barbarous than the savage whom he makes the instrument of his performance. An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, and a scalp for a scalp. Mr. Hubert, a citizen of this

town of good character who has business to transact in Pensacola, will deliver this to you, which I hope will reach your hands with more dispatch than that which you directed to me to which this is the response. I hope that you will grant complete protection to Mr. Hubert and that he will not receive any insult from the savages who are at that place. With the expression of my consideration for your excellency's person, I have the honor to be"

It cannot be doubted that the prime motive that actuated Jackson in his expedition against Pensacola, where the British had been very active for many months, was the defense of the American Republic. The records prove this beyond question.¹ It is true that previous to the present

¹ Extracts similar to the ones quoted in this note from Jackson's war reports and letters can be numerous cited showing that the defense of New Orleans was in his mind at all times during the summer and fall of 1814.

In a letter to Governor Claiborne, dated headquarters, 7th Military district, Fort Jackson, July 21, 1814, he says:

"This morning I was presented with a new British musket given to a friendly Indian by those at Appalachicola Bay. Information has been received by this fellow tending to confirm the rumour of a considerable force having landed there with a large quantity of arms and other munitions of war, and with intention to strike a decisive blow against the lower country. Mobile and Orleans are of such importance as to hold out strong inducements to them, at such a crisis: I must look to the constitutional authorities of the State of Louisiana for such support as will be effective in any emergency, and I trust this support will be afforded with promptitude whenever required."

General Jackson from his headquarters at Mobile wrote to Governor Claiborne on August 22, 1814:

"I have no power to stipulate with any particular corps, as to particular or local service but it is not to be presumed at present

campaign he had given evidence of a desire to raise the American flag along the Florida coast, but, it must be acknowledged by all discerning and impartial historians that this thought was in his mind at the present time only as it related to his main purpose of driving the British from the Gulf Coast. The alliance or affiliation of the Spanish with the British presented a situation that made it necessary for him to attack the former at Pensacola in order to dislodge the latter. With this purpose he began his campaign with enthusiastic energy, an energy that continued forcible and potent to the end, though poor health and the hot climate were sufficient to have deterred any man in his position.

The statement of Henry Adams ¹ that Jackson intended to attack Florida through Pensacola seems to be based on a wrong conception of the campaign. That Jackson would first have to confront the British on the coast whenever they tried to land was evident. Though fearful of the capture of Mobile and reluctant to leave it with the enemy so near, he knew that New Orleans should

that the troops of Louisiana will have to extend their services beyond the limits of their own state. Yet circumstances might arise which would make it necessary they should be called to face an invading enemy beyond the boundary of the state to stop his entry into their territory."

¹ Volume VIII, "History of United States," p. 318. Relative to Jackson's plans, see Bassett's "Life of Andrew Jackson," Volume I.

be strongly fortified. While still engaged with the Creeks he had requested the Government at Washington to send a large quantity of military supplies to New Orleans. On September 5, 1814, he wrote to Governor Claiborne to hold all Louisiana militia in readiness for active service. Accordingly, Fortier says, "Major General Villeré was ordered to organize companies in New Orleans on September 10, 1814, and Major General Philemon Thomas at Baton Rouge on or about October 1st."

The Governor said:

"Major General Jackson commanding the Seventh Military District invites me to lose no time in preparing for the defense of the state. This gallant commander is now near or at Mobile watching the movements of the enemy and making the necessary preparations to cover and defend this section of the Union. He will in due time receive reinforcements from the other states on the Mississippi. He calculates, also, on the zealous support of the Louisianians and must not be disappointed."

During his entire campaign against the Creeks, Jackson, if he had ever entertained any designs against the Spanish, suspended all that did not relate directly to the British. To give ample opportunity for the expression of Spanish neutrality,

three flags of truce were sent, and great pressure was brought to bear on the Governor of Pensacola, before Jackson proceeded to attack the city. The plea of neutrality on the part of the Spanish governor was plainly an artifice which was evident to Jackson. And although the government may have intended for him to accept it, that position soon became so dangerous to the welfare of his own country that he was forced into playing his strongest hand.

Jackson has been severely criticized by historians for his lack of courtesy, some have said fairness, in his relations with Governor Manrique of Florida. But notwithstanding the Spanish Governor's fine speech, which contained some truth as well as much good form and taste in the citation of the many breaches of neutrality on the part of the American government, not forgetting the Baratarian scandal, he could not disguise the fact, although he denied it, that he was in sympathy with the British. Jackson, uncivil as he could sometimes be with little cause, thought largely now of the false, intriguing nature of the man with whom he was dealing. Always open and direct in his own methods, it is not surprising that he gave way to indignation and wrath, not believing the Governor to be worthy of any better

treatment. I daresay that Roosevelt at times has met some such opponent with as much disgust.

It seems a grave injustice to Jackson for Adams to say that he was contemplating a move against East Florida in his attack on Pensacola. (West Florida was already a part of the Mississippi Territory.) It was only after forcing the Spanish to define clearly their position as the acknowledged and active sympathizers of Great Britain, that he regarded and treated them from that standpoint. But had the Spanish Governor signified in sincerity his willingness to drive the British out of Pensacola, it is hardly possible that Jackson would have refused to accept this evidence of his neutrality at this critical juncture.

Though commanding but a small force gathered hurriedly from the State of Tennessee and the Mississippi Territory Jackson was ready for action when three British warships together with several smaller vessels appeared at Pensacola. These proved to be the van of a large naval force already in the Gulf waters. The Spanish made no objection to Colonel Edward Nicholls landing troops and gathering about him the hostile refugee Creeks. The alliance between the Spanish and British became hourly more evident. None could question it when the Cross of St.

George was hoisted over one of the forts of the Spanish town.

Secret messengers had been sent through the country to the Seminoles and Creeks inviting them to come to Pensacola and join the British service. About one thousand of these deluded people, still sore from their recent defeat, came in answer to the call. They were immediately armed, clothed in the British uniform and instructed as to the service expected of them. Captain Gordon, Jackson's first messenger, made special note of this while there.

To the French, who had settled along the Gulf coast, a survival of French occupancy, inflammatory appeals were sent with the hope of alienating them from the American government, no effort being spared to render the inhabitants of the entire coast region false in their allegiance to the Americans. Colonel Nicholls in extending his appeal to the people of every race and creed throughout the coast country promised that a victory on the part of the British would be the means of breaking the chains of the American government that were being forged about them. To the Spanish was he especially urgent. Knowing the adventurous temperament and bold courage of the Baratarian leader, Jean Lafitte, he also made an effort to attach him to the British cause.

But this wily old freebooter had not traveled the high seas with the British sailor for naught. The reward offered him, dazzling though it seemed, was drawn in its phrasing with many disguised clauses any of which might prove only provisional. Besides, the New Orleans blacksmith, born in France, did not like the Englishman whom he termed cold and overbearing. Instinctively, for the wayward at times are capable of sincere sympathy, he turned to the young country contending for its rights. By this preference it is easy to believe that he shrewdly hoped to exonerate himself and his kin from any condemnation for breaking its laws.¹ Consequently Captain Lockyer, commanding the sloop *Sophia*, was compelled to withdraw from Grande Terre on September 3, 1814, after having appeared before it in behalf of the British, not dreaming that the negotiations that had been arranged were nothing more than a ruse on the part of the artful Lafitte. The Baratarian's allegiance to the young Republic and his falling under the spell of Jackson are developed in the story of the defense of New Orleans.

¹ At Guadaloupe the Lafittes were operating under a license from the French Government under the appellation of privateers. On this expiring they turned to the Republic of Cartagena. At their new rendezvous in Baratania Bay they came to be regarded as common smugglers and occasioned much terror and alarm on the seas to both British and Americans. A brother of Jean Lafitte was at this time in prison in the city of New Orleans.

With the Spanish governor known to be in league with the British, Jackson recognized the opportunity at this juncture of ridding the country ultimately of both England and Spain. It can be readily believed that he now waged war looking to that end. In addition to the Tennessee troops brought with him, he had, as has been observed, a large aggregation of volunteer Mississippi troops collected in regular and irregular manner. On these he relied for the most exacting service, since the outcome concerned the Mississippi Territory so vitally, and these troops knew the country and its people better than did any other of his forces at that time.

The Territory was thoroughly aroused and we gather from the message of Governor Holmes, dated November, 1814, that in conformance with a requisition made by President Madison upon the governors of the several States and territories for a corps of 93,500 militia Holmes issued orders immediately for the quota assigned the Mississippi Territory, which was 500 infantrymen and a full troop of cavalry. The troops were to be organized and mobilized at several points where they could be most conveniently ordered to Mount Vernon (now in Alabama). They were reorganized into five companies conformable to the military organization of the

United States. Four hundred of these were ordered immediately to positions assigned them by General Jackson. Governor Holmes in his message further states that in addition to these corps he furnished for service in the United States Army upon the requisition of General Andrew Jackson four full troops of Dragoons subject to the General's orders. Colonel Hinds still commanded the Dragoons and General Jackson stationed them at Washington, Liberty and John Ford's on Pearl River to be ready for duty whenever called upon.

CHAPTER XIX

AMERICANS DEFEND FORT BOWYER

FORT Bowyer, situated on a barren sand-tongue, thirty miles south of Mobile in the Mississippi Territory was the first place on the coast to be attacked by the British. Jackson acting on his own judgment had placed there a small garrison of 130 men, supplied with 20 pieces of cannon, under Major William Lawrence who commanded the fort.¹ Bassett, the latest and best student of the campaign, gives the garrison 160 men. This fort was erected and fortified by Wilkinson in the early part of 1813, and it was well that he had provided the defence. Jackson was right in believing the enemy would attack this place rather than old Fort Charlotte, now become a post of little consequence.

¹Latour in a very elaborate and supposedly scientific description that many historians have vainly attempted to rephrase describes Fort Bowyer at the entrance of Mobile Bay, while a strategical point of much importance, as a redoubt occupying the worst possible place for a fort, commanded by a row of sand hills, and with cannon defectively mounted on makeshift platforms that exposed the whole upper part of a man's body. Relative to the forces attacking the Fort, British accounts report them as a great deal less. The size of the American force, too, has been a subject for dispute among historians.

On the morning of September 12, the British, according to Latour and Pickett, landed 600 Indians and Spaniards and 120 marines. Sentinels stationed in the direction of Lake Borgne also reported that a number of English sloops of war and two brigs had dropped anchor six miles east of the fort. Major Lawrence lost no time in placing his artillery in position, and, though the temporary platforms in a number of instances exposed his men to the enemy's fire, the distribution of the guns, in some respects improperly mounted, was in the main favorable.

On September 13th the British, who had come from Pensacola with four ships on the 12th, attempted to shell the fort. Failing to effect any serious damage they fell back into badly constructed sand-bank entrenchments from which they were driven by the galling fire from the fort. As the situation grew more serious Major Lawrence called a council of his officers who, after binding themselves in a sacred pledge to defend their country with every effort and sacrifice possible to man, adopted a resolution not wholly unique in warfare. This stipulated that should the fort be blown up by the enemy and the garrison in the main destroyed before the remaining forces capitulated no surrender would be considered that did not give the Americans full assur-

ance that they would be treated in every respect as prisoners of war, permitted to retain their arms and protected from any outrage by the Indians as to their person or property. They pledged themselves furthermore that these terms should be carried out to the last man.

By the morning of September 15th the enemy with a fleet composed of the sloops *Hermes* and *Caron*, carrying 42 guns, and the brigs *Anaconda* (*Childers*) and *Sophia* with 36 guns under the command of Commodore Percy, growing impatient at the thought of the easy victory in sight, decided to quit dallying and begin a determined attack on the small garrison. The ships weighed anchor moving under a favorable breeze towards the fort, the *Hermes* commanded by Percy leading the way into the channel and anchoring within musket shot of Fort Bowyer's batteries. Major Lawrence, noting the advance of the squadron and realizing the desperate situation, after again pledging his men to faithful service, with the battle cry of "Don't give up the fort," a paraphrase of the already famous "Don't give up the ship," began his struggle against the enemy. On the afternoon of September 15th, at half past four, the land forces of the enemy became very active and the cannon from a land battery concentrated a fierce fire on the fort. A brilliant marine and

land battle waged for several hours. Though assaulted by 92 pieces of artillery and struggling with infantry many times more numerous than he himself commanded, the gallant defender of the fort, with a loss of but four men, and with only two of his twelve guns having been silenced, repulsed the enemy with severe loss. He caused the total destruction of the flagship *Hermes* at the hands of the British and drove the remaining vessels with disheartened and humiliated commanders back to sea. The *Sophia* was so incapacitated that it was with difficulty that it put to sea.¹ Captain Percy acted throughout with great gallantry.

The following incident taken from Eaton's "Life of General Jackson" reveals the type of national character developing among the people in the far Southern section of the new country:

"It is worthy of remark to show the difference in battle between the two combatants to mark the conduct of British and American officers, under circumstances precisely similar. Whilst the battle raged the flag of the van ship was carried away and at this moment she had ceased to fire. What had caused its disappearance none could

¹ This follows Latour's account who brings all the ships into action, giving the *Hermes* and *Caron* 28 guns apiece and the *Sophia* and *Anaconda* (*Childers*) 34 guns. Historians vary greatly in all numbers connected with this engagement, some following British reports, others American.

tell; no other opinion was or could with propriety be entertained than that it had been hauled down with a view to yield the contest and surrender. Influenced by this belief, Lawrence, with a generosity characteristic of our officers, immediately desisted from further firing. The appearance of a new flag and a broadside from the ship next the *Hermes* was the first intelligence received that such was not the fact; and the contest again raged with renewed violence. It was but a few minutes, however, before the flag staff of the fort was also carried away; but so far from pursuing the same generous course that had just been witnessed, the zeal of the enemy was increased, and the assault more furiously urged. At this moment, Nicholls and Woodbine, at the head of their embattled train, perceiving what had happened, that our 'star spangled banner' had sunk, at once presuming all danger to have subsided made a most courageous sally from their strong hold; and pushing towards their vanquished foes, were already calculating on a rich harvest of blood and plunder; but a well-directed fire checked their progress, dissipated their expectations and drove them back."

It was very clear to Jackson now that the British contemplated landing on the coast. The general government had been informed that it was the enemy's purpose to gain possession of the coast bordering Louisiana and the Mississippi Territory and to capture New Orleans from

Mobile by a land attack. We shall see, however, how he was thwarted. On retiring to Pensacola, Colonel Nicholls, who thought little of Jackson and his men, openly boasted that he would be joined immediately by ten thousand troops and the whole fleet and that within a few weeks Mobile and other points would be under the control of the British and Spanish. It mattered little with the British where they landed their army, as long as it was at a strategic point, and since the coast offered such a number of places it is evident that they would have preferred marching on New Orleans from an inland direction rather than to have taken the hazardous route to which circumstances forced them. That Jackson withstood their various attempts to establish themselves on the coast and cautiously followed them to New Orleans finally to expel them from the country, is a chain in which there is no link missing. While the weakness of his forces made his plan seem at times a somewhat random scheme, it was the same from first to last: that is, keeping up with the British until he was rid of them.

Always bitter in his denunciation of ineffective service, he was equally extravagant in his praise of that well performed, and Major Lawrence, the report of disaster at Fort Bowyer having been refuted and the victory confirmed, was the recip-

ient of sincere and oft-repeated praise from his enthusiastic superior. The reinforcements sent with Major Lavall had not reached the scene in time to assist in the defense. The latter's failure to take part was understood by Jackson, for it was known that these troops were among the best in his army.

CHAPTER XX.

JACKSON CAPTURES PENSACOLA

GENERAL JACKSON, now in radiant mood over the fighting qualities displayed by his troops in the defense of Fort Bowyer, immediately left his headquarters at Mobile for Pensacola with a view of meeting the British, who were known to be fortifying themselves at that point.¹ Taking every precaution as to supplies and financial needs, even to the extent of securing personal loans for which he himself was liable, he assembled his troops near Fort Montgomery at Pierce's Stockade on the Alabama River. His forces consisted of three regiments of United States infantry, the 3rd Regiment having been heavily recruited from the Mississippi militia, a large regiment of Tennessee militia under General Coffee, and the Mississippi Dragoons under Colonel Thomas Hinds—in all about 4,000 troops. Original reports show that

¹ Jackson was now at Mobile. See Latour, *p.* 42. See letter from Jackson to Governor Holmes, dated September 14, 1814, Town of Mobile, on file in the Mississippi Department of Archives and History.

a large number of infantry were furnished by Governor Holmes for the expedition.

General Jackson was deeply impressed with the fine body of young men that composed the Mississippi cavalry. The families of a number of these he had known personally during his residence at Old Greenville and on the Bayou Pierre in the Mississippi Territory. So struck was he with their physical appearance and soldierly bearing that he took time to write again to Governor Holmes and thank him for his prompt manner in assembling and organizing his quota of troops, referring especially to the Dragoons as "fine young men calculated to endure every hardship." In the reorganization of this cavalry battalion, which was later to become famous in the defense of New Orleans, Major Hinds was again placed in command.

In the expedition against Pensacola General Jackson's small but effective force included some of the best fiber of the young manhood of Tennessee, tall, supple and clear-eyed. Two-thirds of these, though every inch frontier soldiers and consequently somewhat stoical, were in no sense the half-civilized, saturnine, lawless creatures that Roosevelt makes them out. They were strictly pioneer folk, it is true, but many of them possessed charm of manner and person in ad-

dition to some education gained from reading. Many of the privates wrote crude but fluent letters to their relatives and friends containing sentiments of a high order.

The various units of the army now assuming shape for the expedition against the British at Pensacola were in training within a few weeks after the assembling of the different corps at Pierce's Stockade. A number of the soldiers from the Mississippi and Tennessee commands had seen service together in the fierce battles with the Creek Indians during the fall of 1813. A strong national consciousness had been developed and their patriotism was now at high tide. They sought further outlets for it under the magnetic Jackson who by this time stood out as the commanding genius of the army in the South. Victory, however, they felt was not to be had without great sacrifice. For they still bore in mind the cruelty of their Creek adversaries at Fort Mims and along the Tombigbee and Alabama. Stories, too, of the horrible acts of their arch enemy, the British, along the Georgia coast and on Cumberland Island were being circulated daily.¹ Jackson's troops were the sons of American patriots, many of whom had perished for their belief in

¹ General Napier, a British officer, and the Duke of Wellington have both severely condemned the conduct of the British army during this period of its history.

personal rights and liberties. What we now with reverence term the "faiths of our fathers" were beginning to be proudly referred to. In addition they were hardy frontiersmen wholly unacquainted with fear and eager for that adventure that spurns the credible and is at home only with the improbable. Primitive and creative instincts and powers were at work, each eager for supremacy.

It was in sportive mood that the men confidently left their horses with a large number of the troops near Fort Montgomery and marched on foot to Pensacola. On the 6th 3,000 troops had arrived from Jackson's headquarters and, copying Colonel Nicholls' bad manners, in a somewhat boastful, possibly contemptuous frame of mind, were before the Spanish capital.

The Mississippi Dragoons under Major Thomas Hinds had led the way through the forest, their dark blue uniforms, faced with scarlet, and sabres slung within white belts supplying a cheerful note of color. As they approached the Spanish stronghold a small detachment of the Dragoons under Lieutenant Murray was sent forward to reconnoiter. While advancing the brave young Mississippian, the first to sacrifice his life in expelling the British from the coast, was mortally wounded by an Indian, a painful

circumstance that soon convinced Jackson that a hostile reception awaited him. But with due appreciation of the usages of war, he dispatched another emissary in the person of Major Pierre, and though the latter went rather as an ambassador than as an officer of war and approached the city with a flag of truce, he, too, was received with open hostility.

Though it was reliably reported that the colors of Spain and Great Britain were flying together over the fort and that Colonel Nicholls and his staff were guests of the city, Jackson, still determined to give the Spanish every opportunity to define their position, sent an ambassador again at midnight to present the proposition that the Spanish governor should permit the American troops to occupy the forts until his own government could send a sufficient force to maintain neutrality. The latter rejected the proposition, claiming that he was powerless to resist the invasion of the British. The shrewd frontiersman was now fully convinced that these protestations of inability to cope with the British were only pretexts to cover a more sinister motive. He immediately ordered the 3,000 troops from the encampment to attack the city, disposing them in three columns. Major Woodruff with a detachment of the 39th and 44th Regiments of United States

Infantry, with two pieces of artillery, composed the center, assisted by the Tennessee volunteers under General Coffee and the Mississippi Dragoons under Major Hinds.¹ These, with Majors Blue and Kennedy commanding a company of Mississippi and Tennessee militia to which belonged a number of Choctaw Indians, composed the force attacking the town.

The columns moved against the town eastward along the beach. The old fort had once been a place of great beauty and importance, the large evergreen trees, the harbor and warm southern skies making a brilliant setting for the little city on the Escambia. Though church bells still proclaimed the remnants of an old world civilization, the place had changed and the streets of these later years—rendezvous of pirate, smuggler, and Indian trader—presented an uninviting appearance; still many Spanish families and quaint Spanish houses remained as lonely survivors of colonial dignity.

By a swift strategic movement Jackson massed a column of his main force on the west as if he intended to attack the town from that direction, and by this maneuver outwitted both the British

¹ "At Pensacola," Trimble, a member of the Jefferson Troop and an eye-witness, says, "the Mississippi Dragoons were between and exposed to two fires—one from Fort St. George in the rear of the town and the other from the seven British war ships in the harbor."

and Spanish. All the inhabitants, men, women and children joined in its defense. The entrance of the Americans was stoutly resisted by a two-gun battery erected in the principal street, which poured volley after volley on the brave Major Laval¹ and his men as they strove to take it. From every housetop and window an avalanche of bullets, rocks and missiles of every description rained down upon the invaders. The defense, as furious and fierce as any recorded in history, was still but as the efforts of children. The sturdy columns of Jackson stormed the city in one fierce onslaught, carrying the Spanish battery at the point of the bayonet, after which a flag of truce was sent out by the worsted Spanish, borne, it is said, by the terrified Governor himself. When the hand to hand conflict ceased and the smoke cleared from the streets of the old Spanish town, the victory belonged to the Americans who had conducted the capture of the city with the form and order of the most approved

¹ Major William Laval was a native of Charleston, South Carolina. He was the son of a French officer who was attached to the legion of the Duke of Lauzon, who assisted the Americans in their struggle for liberty. When the Creek War broke out Major Laval was promoted and marched with the Regiment to which his company belonged to Fort Claiborne and from thence to the Holy Ground, where he participated in the battle. From the wound which he received upon the occasion of the siege of Pensacola, he suffered severely for two years and was rendered a cripple for life.

military operations. The loss of eight men killed and eleven wounded robbed Jackson of several gallant officers. Consternation reigned among the inhabitants of the town. The Governor of Pensacola under a flag of truce agreed to give the Americans possession of Forts St. Michael and Barrancas. After some insubordinate conduct on the part of the Spanish commandant of Fort St. Michael had been punished, the American garrison occupied that fort, Barrancas having been blown up on the morning of the 8th by the British before they fled the place. This left Jackson the victor, but an angry and disappointed one, some assert, as it was without spoils. Notwithstanding Jackson's disappointment he was greatly elated over the expulsion of the British from Pensacola. For thus another attempt by the British to settle themselves on the coast had failed. We next find them blundering on towards New Orleans, over a water route that had never been previously planned either by Nicholls or Pakenham.¹

The people of the Mississippi Territory, so near the scene of trouble, felt more secure after the

¹ The name is spelled Pakenham by English and some American historians. Latour and Roosevelt spell it with a "c," while Parton at times introduces a participial form in the middle syllable, thereby obtaining a cadence that conforms nicely to the easy swing of his rich metaphor. In this edition the English spelling, as used by the Encyclopedia Britannica, is followed.

fall of Pensacola. The territorial population was intensely devoted to the American cause and though sparsely settled throughout its broad expanse the Territory had furnished Jackson nearly all its men which left it in an exposed condition. "Mississippi," Barton has stated, "was now sending all her forces to Mobile."

General Jackson greatly enjoyed the chagrin of the Spanish at their desertion by the British and the abject manner in which the Creeks now acknowledged his superiority was both droll and amusing. Among them was Big Warrior, the former leader of the Peace Party among the Creeks, but now a British sympathizer, having become dissatisfied with the treaty Jackson had made with his tribe.

The news of Major Lawrence's defense of Fort Bowyer and Jackson's victory at Pensacola immediately spread along the Gulf coast and wherever there was a French colony its allegiance was greatly strengthened. They recognized that the American general had struck a vital blow at Pensacola in driving the British from the place. He had also punished the Spaniards for their perfidy and demoralized the belligerent remnant of the Creek Indians. The last were again giving Jackson cause for much anxiety, having become

dissatisfied with the treaty. The quelling of these wandering bands of dissatisfied Indians was a work that the gallant Major Blue¹ of the 39th Regiment continued to perform with the utmost success while Jackson was busy with preparations for the defense of New Orleans.

Jackson had managed his campaign with genius and strategy. With an eye to the future, his garrison was not suffered to leave Pensacola until every fort was destroyed and it was rendered useless as a harbor for the English navy. Elated over the success of his campaign thus far, he withdrew his army from Pensacola and stopped at Mobile, then a place of 150 houses with only the ancient Fort Charlotte to protect it. Both officers and men were in high spirits. The Tennesseans and Mississippians bore themselves with fine and easy grace as they sang and jested their way through the beautiful Southern forest and Jackson now had the satisfaction of witnessing a thoroughly united spirit among his troops.

The defense of Mobile Point and the capture of Pensacola were brilliant military feats executed

¹The narrative by Major Blue of his war upon the Indians has not been preserved and is thought to be a decided loss to the history of the campaign in the Southern country. In this service it is thought that he had with him Pushmataha with 55 Choctaw troops. However, the strength of all forces engaged in the campaign has been variously reported by different historians.

in a masterly manner. In Rowland's "Encyclopedia of Mississippi History" the author has observed that the movements of the small army in this campaign and its return to Mobile through a wild and almost pathless wilderness were as well conceived and as brilliantly and rapidly executed as anything in the history of Napoleon's marches or in the achievements of Stonewall Jackson or Grant, yet historians have never done the campaign justice, some barely mentioning it, others garbling the story. This may be explained by the fact that American historians have heretofore had little access to the records of the South.

CHAPTER XXI

JACKSON PREPARES TO DEFEND NEW ORLEANS

GENERAL JACKSON did not believe that the defense of Fort Bowyer (Mobile Point), or the capture of Pensacola, which he had carried out so successfully upon his own initiative, had put an end to the designs of the British in the lower South. Though forty-seven years old, already past the exuberance of youth, sick and exhausted by exposure to the winter rain and suffering from malaria, he kept his plan well in hand with a view of first freeing the coast of the enemy and forcing him to take a water route to New Orleans, the place that he believed would be the final point of attack.

Meantime the British fleet continued to gather in the Southern waters below New Orleans, and Governor Claiborne of Louisiana was filled with the gravest apprehension for the safety of the Louisiana capital. Parton describing the fleet in a vivid picture that will interest the youthful reader says:

“At the western extremity of the Island of Jamaica there are two headlands eight miles apart which inclose Negril Bay and render it a safe and convenient anchorage. If the good Creoles of New Orleans could have surveyed from the summit of one of those headlands the scene which Negril Bay presented on the twenty-fourth of November, 1814, it is questionable if General Jackson could have given them the slightest confidence in his ability to defend their native city. The spectacle would have given pause even to the General himself.

“It was the rendezvous of the British fleet designed for the capture of New Orleans. The day just named was the one appointed for its final inspection and review, previous to its departure for Lake Borgne. A fleet of fifty armed vessels, many of them of the first magnitude, covered the waters of the bay. There lay the huge *Tonnant* of eighty guns, one of Nelson's prizes at the Battle of the Nile, now exhibiting the pennant of Six Alexander Cochrane, the admiral in command of the imposing fleet. Rear-Admiral Sir Edward Codrington was also on board the *Tonnant*, a name of renown in the naval history of England. There was the *Royal Oak*, a seventy-four, the ship of Rear-Admiral Malcolm. Four other seventy-fours, the *Norge*, the *Bedford*, the *Asia*, the *Ramilies*, formed part of the fleet; the last-named in command of Sir Thomas Hardy, the beloved of Nelson, to whom the dying hero gasped those immortal words, ‘Kiss me, Hardy;

I die content.' There, too, were the *Dictator* of fifty guns; the *Gorgon* of fifty-four; the *Anside* of thirty-eight, commanded by Sir Thomas Trowbridge of famous memory; the *Sea-horse* of thirty-five, under Captain James Alexander Gordon, late the terror of the Potomac; the *Belle Poule*, of thirty-eight, a ship of fame. Nine other ships, mounting thirty-eight, thirty-six, and thirty-two guns; five smaller vessels, each carrying sixteen guns; three bomb craft and eleven transports completed the formidable catalogue. Nor were these all the vessels destined to take part in the enterprise. A fleet from Bordeaux was still on the ocean to join the expedition at the entrance of Lake Borgne, where, also, Captain Percy's squadron from Pensacola, with Nicholls and the brave Captain Lockyer, were to effect a junction. And yet other vessels, direct from England, with the general appointed to command the army, were expected.

"The decks of the ships in Negril Bay were crowded with red-coated soldiers. The four regiments, numbering with their sappers and artillerymen three thousand one hundred men who had fought the Battle of Bladensburg, burnt the public buildings of Washington and lost their general near Baltimore the summer before, were on board the fleet. Four regiments under General Keane had come from England direct to reinforce this army. Two regiments, composed in part of negro troops, supposed to be peculiarly adapted to the climate of New Orleans, had been drawn from the

West Indies to join the expedition. The fleet could furnish, if required, a body of fifteen hundred marines. General Keane found himself on his arrival from Plymouth in command of an army of seven thousand four hundred and fifty men, which the marines of the fleet could swell to eight thousand nine hundred and fifty. The number of sailors could scarcely have been less than ten thousand, of whom a large proportion could, and did, assist in the operations contemplated.

“Here was a force of nearly twenty thousand men, a fleet of fifty ships, carrying a thousand guns, and perfectly appointed in every particular, commanded by officers some of whom had grown gray in victory. And this great armament was about to be directed against poor, swamp-environed New Orleans, with its ragged, half-armed defenders floating down the Mississippi, or marching wearily along through the mire and flood of the Gulf shores, commanded by a general who had seen fourteen months’ service, and caught one glimpse of a civilized foe. The greater part of General Keane’s army were fresh from the fields of the Peninsula and had been led by victorious Wellington into France, to behold and share in that final triumph of British arms. To these Peninsular heroes were added the ninety-third Highlanders, recently from the Cape of Good Hope; one of the ‘praying regiments’ of the British army; as stalwart, as brave, as completely appointed a body of men as had stood in arms since Cromwell’s Ironsides gave liberty and

greatness to England. Indeed, there was not a regiment of those which had come from England to form this army which had not won brilliant distinction in strongly-contested fields. The élite of England's army and navy were afloat in Negril Bay on that bright day of November, when the last review took place.

"The scene can be easily imagined—the great fleet of ships spread far and wide over the bay, gay with flags and alive with throngs of red uniforms; boats rowed with the even stroke of men-of-war's-men gliding about among the ships, or going rapidly to and from the shore. On board all was animation and movement. The most incorrigible croaker in the fleet could not, as he looked upon the scene on that bright day of the tropical winter, have felt a doubt that the most easy and complete success awaited the enterprise. As every precaution had been taken to conceal the destination of the expedition, the officers expected to find the city wholly unprepared for defense. To occupy, not to conquer Louisiana, was supposed to be but the preliminary business of the army. From New Orleans, as the basis of operations, they expected to ascend the Mississippi, pushing their conquests to the right and left, and effecting a juncture with the army of Canada, to overawe and hem in the western States. So certain were they of taking New Orleans, that several gentlemen with their families were on board the fleet who had been appointed to civil offices in the city of New Orleans. Among others was a collector

for the port, accompanied by his five beautiful daughters. Many wives of officers were on board anticipating a pleasant winter among the gay Creoles of the Crescent City. Music, dancing, dramatic entertainments, and all the diversions of shipboard, were employed to relieve the monotony of the voyage."

On December 2, 1814, General Jackson arrived in the city of New Orleans after making the defenses of Mobile as secure as possible, an accomplishment on which he was determined before leaving the place.¹ That he had sought to remedy conditions at New Orleans is shown in the fact that he had applied to the War Department for an officer of high rank to command the disorganized forces at that place and had sent his own Inspector-General there. Leave the Mobile coast he would not until the British began to show indications that they had despaired of it. The people of New Orleans were greatly relieved at his coming. His fame, colored with various hues, had preceded him, and with curiosity tempered with a touch of humor they went to meet him. Governor Claiborne, intensely American and full of patriotic zeal, Edward Livingston, a distinguished lawyer, Commodore Patterson and many other high dignitaries

¹ See Latour, *p.* 52. Some historians place Jackson's arrival in the city on the morning of December 1.

received him with a warm welcome. To the handsome, immaculately attired and debonair Creole gentlemen and the well-to-do and well-dressed Americans, the tall, raw-boned figure clad in a leather cap, worn blue Spanish cloak and rough army boots, at first glance was neither prepossessing nor reassuring. Soldierly bearing, dignity and self-confidence, however, clothed the whole man with a singular grace that intensified as by some strange magic now that he was subjected to close public scrutiny. Soon all eyes were searching the gaunt, clean-shaven and rather forlorn face, pallid from fevers and bronzed by Southern suns. But the cool, steady gray eyes, firm but kindly mouth, and strip of graying sandy hair about the temples presented anything but an uncouth appearance. These coupled with a certain confidence in gesture and speech soon worked a hypnotic spell that mere good looks minus personality could never have achieved. The people of the city, both men and women, were not long in acknowledging the irresistible charm of Jackson's presence. Something in his manner suggestive of power immediately won their admiration. The Livingston home was thrown open to him and not only the members of this distinguished family but all guests and friends who visited it felt the charm of his unusual person-

ality.¹ Some delightful entertainment was arranged for him by Mrs. Livingston during which the beautiful young women of New Orleans received him cordially, filled with admiration for the singular but kindly soldier who had come to protect their city from an invading foe.²

Some historians have charged the people of Louisiana with indifference to their fate. Henry Adams has represented them as "distrustful" and "volatile" ³; but careful investigation shows that the Louisiana soldiery as a whole coöperated in the most gallant spirit with Jackson and Claiborne in their heroic efforts to rid the country of the enemy. Notwithstanding the ill will that had grown up between Jackson and a majority of the legislature, the people of the city were filled with patriotic ardor in its defense. The French no less than the Americans responded with the truest patriotism. If a small number of Spanish were at times neutral this was brought about by personal dislike of the local French and

¹ Edward Livingston, who had already experienced a prominent and somewhat notorious public career as Mayor of New York City, was now a distinguished member of the New Orleans bar. It has been stated that he assisted General Jackson in the preparation of his several addresses to the people of Louisiana. However, all original documents left by Jackson possess a Jacksonian touch that is unmistakable.

² Grace King in her "History of New Orleans" gives a charming account of the city and its people on this occasion.

³ Adams, *p.* 346. Roosevelt attributes their assisting Jackson to "hatred of the common foe" and not to any allegiance to the Republic. See *p.* 458, "Naval War of 1812."

American population. The people of the State, which on their own demand was now a full-fledged member of the Union, were fast developing a national spirit and were unaffected by the numerous appeals of the British, though these appeals were of the shrewdest nature and carried most extravagant promises. With the exception of a few fishermen not a single instance is recorded where a reputable person of Spanish descent in Louisiana was actively influenced by the appeals of the British, though the Spanish government at Pensacola was known to be in open and active sympathy with the enemy. During the months of August and September Edward Livingston, an American patriot of influence and distinction, had received warm assurances of the loyalty of the people to the American government. How much this response to national spirit on the part of the Louisianians was due to Jackson's influence has been a matter of much controversy among historians. But subjected as they were to Nicholls' influence which included many tempting bribes, it would seem that in choosing the weaker side the people acted on their own initiative. Even when it was believed that Jackson would burn the city in case it was captured, the allegiance of the Louisiana troops was found to be as strong as any in the army.

On his arrival in New Orleans Jackson immediately set about a twenty days' preparation for the defense of the city. The Mississippi, by which it was anticipated the British in all probability would attack, now received the most careful attention in the matter of fortifications. Major Latour, who was not only a skilled engineer and a good soldier but a remarkable man in many respects, was called into close consultation by Jackson in his plans for the defense of the city, which was found to be unfortified. For though the British were known to be at this time with their fleet somewhere in the Southern seas precautionary defense for New Orleans had been overlooked or neglected by the government, a neglect that certainly should not be laid at Jackson's door.

Jackson himself, while still among the Creeks, had called the government's attention to the importance of supplying New Orleans with some means of defense, but after having prevented the British from finding a lodgment at Pensacola and Mobile he had now to face the fact that nothing had been done by the authorities at Washington to fortify the place. Lying narrowly between the river and the wide stretch of morass bordering Lake Pontchartrain, it demanded only that the former should be well fortified, and left to their own initiative it did not take the discerning

soldier and the talented engineer long to place an adequate defense about the city, building better than the unprotected inhabitants dreamed. As a main part of the defense, two effective batteries mounted with 24-pounders were located on the side of the river opposite Fort St. Philip, one at old Fort Bourbon and the other a half mile below. These were to operate in conjunction with the fire from Fort St. Philip. Another battery was placed at the confluence of the Bayou Sauvage and the Chef-Menteur River. The plans and construction of all fortifications were put in charge of Major Latour who was a few weeks later to take a heroic part in the artillery defense of the city. Lieutenant-Colonel McRae was placed in command of the State troops.

In addition to the construction of batteries Jackson sent orders to Governor Claiborne to have the bayous obstructed along the entire coast from Attakapas to Chef-Menteur and Manchac. The inhabitants of the parishes of Plaquemine, St. Bernard, St. Charles and St. John the Baptist were called on by Governor Claiborne in accordance with a resolution passed by the legislature to assist with their slaves in the erection of fortifications for the defense of the city, and the patriotism, zeal and energy displayed by the Governor is worthy of more extended notice. His

patriotic appeals to the inhabitants throughout the trying period when the city was in danger of falling into the hands of the British were second in fervor only to those of Jackson. Being fully aware of the local jealousies between the American, French, and Spanish elements in the State's population, and knowing the attitude of the Spanish as Pensacola, the Governor was at times disposed to be despondent regarding the situation, but this fear only sharpened his anxiety and even before Jackson arrived he had done much toward making the people realize the danger that threatened.

CHAPTER XXII

NAVAL ENGAGEMENT ON LAKE BORGNE

WHILE Jackson was busy preparing for the defense of New Orleans, going on a trip of six days' inspection of the defenses of the lake shore, the whole British fleet was now generally known to be approaching the city. The arrival of sixty vessels, men-of-war and gunboats in the Gulf waters, among them the great two-decker *Tonnant* floating the admiral's colors, with rumors of a larger number still to come, was sufficient to alarm the small naval force at the New Orleans station. The United States Navy at this point was commanded by Commodore Daniel T. Patterson, who had been in command since the inception of the war. A few gunboats, not more than 6 with a number of vessels, carrying in all 23 guns and 182 men, made a weak naval defense for a city threatened with invasion by a strong nation, and, indeed, the American navy, as gallant as it proved to be, was insufficient everywhere. Little attempt had been made to strengthen the navy at New Orleans, although both Claiborne

and Patterson indignantly protested when the construction of the gunboat on Lake Pontchartrain, a vessel intended to carry 42 cannon, was suspended. The American government was neglectful—whatever may have been the excuse—in not maintaining a sufficient naval defense at this important outpost. Had it not been for the heroic and spirited manner in which Jackson resisted the enemy, New Orleans certainly would have fallen a prey to British invasion before any news of a treaty between the two countries had reached the southern section.

Among other sources of information received daily by the Americans a letter apprising Commodore Patterson of the arrival of the British fleet came anonymously from Pensacola and on account of its interesting character is given here:

“TO COMMODORE DANIEL T. PATTERSON,
NEW ORLEANS,

“PENSACOLA, 5TH DECEMBER, 1814.

“SIR,

“I feel it a duty to apprise you of a very large force of the enemy off this port, and it is generally understood New Orleans is the object of attack. It amounts at present to about eighty vessels, and more than double that number are momentarily looked for, to form a junction, when an immediate commencement of their operations will take place.

I am not able to learn, how, when, or where the attack will be made; but I heard that they have vessels of all descriptions, and a large body of troops. Admiral Cochrane commands, and his ship, the *Tonnant*, lies at this moment just outside the bar; they certainly appear to have swept the West Indies of troops, and probably no means will be left untried to obtain their object. The admiral arrived only yesterday noon.

“I AM YOURS, &c.,

“N_____.”

Whoever “N” may have been, whether American, French, or friendly Spaniard, Patterson was grateful for all information and hastened preparations to meet the enemy at the Mariana and Christian Passes. He immediately sent five gun-boats, one tender and a dispatch boat, to watch the powerful British fleet which on the morning of December 13 was seen shaping its course towards Pass Christian. Later the enemy’s flotilla sent from the main squadron gained the Pass and moved westward towards the American boats under command of Captain Thomas A. P. Catesby Jones.¹ The shallow water of the lake caused by a constant westerly breeze prevented the American boats from floating, though every effort was made to remedy the situation by throw-

¹ Captain Jones’s name is spelled differently in many histories. This signature is attached to his original report.

ing overboard all articles of weight. At 3:45 of December 13 the enemy dispatched boats to cut off the schooner *Seahorse* which had been sent into Bay St. Louis by the American officers to assist in the removal of the public stores which had been previously ordered. On finding that it was impossible to remove them they were ordered destroyed for fear of capture by the British. A volley of grape shot from the *Seahorse* caused the three boats attacking to retire out of reach of her guns until joined by four more when the enemy, now in command of seven boats, renewed the attack. Sailing-Master Johnson, commanding the *Seahorse*, took position near the land fortification from which battery two 6-pounders kept up a constant action for a half hour, causing a partial loss of one of the enemy's boats and several of the crew. In the afternoon of December 13 the flood tide set in and Captain Jones's small division of the little American fleet moved out of its groundings and sailed for Bay St. Louis; the appearance of the enemy in large numbers caused it to steer towards Petites Coquilles, which fort stood at the entry of the pass at the Rigolets, Captain Jones having been ordered to make a last desperate stand at this point. Adverse winds caused the boats to ground again in the channel of Malheureux Island. Their situation was discovered early

in the morning of December 14 by a British flotilla which moved forward in solid line to attack the helpless gunboats. The perfect calm and swift ebb tide in the pass exposed the American boats to serious danger and Captain Jones, seeing that the only course to pursue was to force the enemy to battle, set about occupying as advantageous a position as possible. He immediately called all commanding officers on board of his ship and made them aware of his plans, giving each vessel its position and ordering all to "form a close line abreast across the channel anchored by the stern with springs on the cable" (see original report of Captain Thomas A. P. C. Jones). It was in this position that the small American fleet on Lake Borgne in the west end of the passage of Malheureux Island awaited the advancing foe, a fleet consisting of 45 launches and barges mounting one carronade each of 12, 18, and 24 caliber. In addition there were two launches mounting each one long brass 9, and 12-pounders and three gigs supplied with small arms, the total number of cannon being 43 pieces. The flotilla was manned with 1,200 men and officers. It was commanded by Captain Nicholas Lockyer, who received several severe wounds during the engagement. It was with the deepest anxiety, but cool and undaunted courage, that the little fleet

awaited the approach of its powerful enemy. At 9 o'clock on December 14, the attack began. The tender *Alligator* had been grounded two miles to the southeast of Malheureux Island and could not join the gunboats and the enemy spying her sent a small division forward. After a spirited resistance the tender capitulated and the British immediately turned her guns upon the American boats, the entire fleet of 45 barges advancing in line. The fire from the American gunboats temporarily checked the advance and the fleet divided, one division of 15 barges attacking Gunboat 156. Upon this division Captain Jones directed his guns. By 11 o'clock A. M. the entire British force was attacking the small flotilla. The stubborn resistance made by the Americans is graphically told by Captain Jones in his report to Commodore Patterson, which is given in part:

“At 10:30 the enemy weighed forming a line abreast in open order and steering direct for our line, which was unfortunately in some degree broken by the force of the current driving Nos. 156 and 163 about one hundred yards in advance. As soon as the enemy came within reach of our shot a deliberate fire from our long guns was opened upon him but without much effect, the objects being of such small size. At 10 minutes before 11 the enemy opened a fire from the whole of his line when the action became general and

destructive on both sides. About 11:49 the advance boats of the enemy, three in number, attempted to board No. 156 but were repulsed with the loss of nearly every officer killed or wounded and two boats sunk. A second attempt to board was then made by four other boats which shared almost a similar fate."

One of the boats that went down astern Gunboat 156 carried 180 men.¹ It was about this time that Captain Jones was severely wounded by a ball in the left shoulder which caused his removal from the deck. Master's mate Parker immediately took charge and while gallantly defending the vessel he too was wounded, when the victorious enemy with superior numbers swarmed down on the gallant boat and gained possession of its deck a little after 12 o'clock. The enemy immediately turned the guns of his prize on the struggling gunboats, firing several shots before striking the American colors. The plucky little fleet still continued heroic resistance a half hour longer, when it surrendered, though not without having nobly defended the honor of the American navy. It is plainly seen that had there been a strong naval force at this point the British would have found it difficult to land close enough to

¹Latour, *p.* 61. These launches were not heavily manned, but it was their duty to take survivors off vessels in difficulty.

attack New Orleans situated as far inland as it was.

The loss of the British in this naval engagement was very great, numbering in killed and wounded about 300, which included many officers.¹ Captain Lockyer, who commanded the flotilla with a great deal of gallantry, was severely wounded three times during the action. The loss to the American fleet was slight in comparison with that of the British, being near 60 which was one-third of its whole number. The stubborn resistance of the little squadron, especially of Gunboat 156, commanded by Captain A. P. Catesby Jones, has been retold by many historians, but the best story is found in his original reports of the affair.

¹ Latour, *p.* 61. Later historians make the number less.

CHAPTER XXIII

JACKSON CONTINUES HIS PREPARATIONS FOR THE
DEFENSE OF NEW ORLEANS

THE naval operations of the British being successful in this engagement, their determination shortly to attack New Orleans became increasingly evident to General Jackson, who knew that since the coast had not afforded a landing place the enemy had determined to concentrate on a speedy capture of the city. Every effort possible must now be made to defend it and the determined, alert, and resourceful American General lost not a moment in making preparations to that end. With all six approaches difficult and the city both forest and swamp-bound, he at least had some small odds in his favor. His energy and patriotic zeal were contagious and the people now responded with the keenest enthusiasm. In addition to his local measures, the execution of which required the utmost in delicacy if not in crafty diplomacy and at times a decisiveness that savored of autocracy, he sent a hurried order to General Coffee, whom he had

removed from the Mobile country and stationed near Baton Rouge, informing him of the fate of the American gunboats and directing him to march with his troops immediately into camp at New Orleans. General Coffee arrived in camp near New Orleans on the 19th of December and was joined by General Carroll on the 21st. The latter reached Natchez in the Mississippi Territory on the 13th and was joined by Judge George Poindexter as aid.

Coast defense was also recommended by General Jackson to General Winchester at Mobile. The Secretary of War was notified of the exposed condition of the city, also that the greatest danger was apprehended and that arms should be immediately supplied. The inaccessibility of the coast country prevented close coöperation between it and the government at Washington, distance and difficulties of transportation making it impossible for speedy aid to be secured. The lukewarm response and, in some instances, open defiance which the Louisiana legislature gave to General Jackson's calls for assistance let the cause have been what it may, were not creditable to a body representing the interests of a people already an integral part of the American Union, a people, too, who were in grave peril of a ruthless invasion. But so many racial differences

existed that unanimous action could hardly have been expected, and a close study of the actions of this body reveals the fact that it was not without a deep sense of responsibility, even though unanimous support was not always accorded proposed measures having to do with the public weal.

Notwithstanding the attitude of the legislature, General Jackson who if not during the Creek campaign now proved himself to be a master of details continued to appeal to the people. His address delivered when the militia of the city was reviewed, exceptional for its spirited fervor and eloquence, made on Sunday, December 18th, to the citizens, the battalions of uniformed companies and all volunteers, and also to the Baratarian pirates, whose loyalty and heroism were later to become the theme of every tongue, had a telling effect, and of treason, if such had been suspected, there was no sign.

With the utmost speed and precaution Jackson continued his preparations for the defense of the city. Knowing that in such a crisis every hand must be raised against the enemy and that every power that the law in extremities sometimes sanctions should be invoked he left no stone unturned for the accomplishment of his task, even to the declaring of martial law. As the days passed it became evident that the spirit of the city was

in full unison with his own. He now had the satisfaction of seeing all things yield to his powerful purpose. The sharp criticism by Adams and McMaster that he had done nothing for the defense of New Orleans before the arrival of the British shows a lack of careful research.¹

As a further proof of his knowledge of New Orleans's peril General Jackson from his camp in the Mississippi Territory during the month of October, 1814, had addressed the following letter to Governor Holmes: ²

"SIR,

"Information has been received, from sources which entitle it to the highest credit, that twelve or fifteen thousand men were to have been embarked from Ireland, destined to attempt the conquest of Louisiana, early in the month of September.

"This justifies me in preparing for immediate use all the resources afforded to me by government for the protection of this district.

"You will therefore, immediately direct the whole militia force of the Mississippi Territory, to be prepared, and held in readiness to take the field at a moment's warning.

"From the alacrity you have heretofore displayed in furnishing the quota from your Terri-

¹ Adams, *p.* 339. McMaster, Vol. IV, *p.* 181, History of the people of the United States.

² Original letter to Governor Holmes signed by Andrew Jackson on file in the Mississippi Historical Department.

tory, I anticipate an early and effectual compliance with this requisition."

(Signed) etc.

For the purpose of sustaining my contention regarding Jackson's preparations before the arrival of the British at New Orleans, a lengthy excerpt from Latour is here inserted: ¹

"General Jackson was returning from a tour of observation to the river of Chef-Menteur, when the intelligence of the loss of the gun-boats reached him. He immediately ordered the militia-battalion of men of colour, commanded by Major Lacoste, and the dragoons of Feliciana, to proceed with two pieces of cannon and take post at the confluence of bayou Sauvage and the river of Chef-Menteur, in order to cover the road to the city, on that side, and watch the enemy's movements. Major Lacoste was also ordered to erect a close redoubt surrounded with a fosse, according to a plan which I drew agreeably to General Jackson's orders.

"On his arrival in town, the general bent his attention to the fortifying of all assailable points, it being impossible to ascertain which the enemy would make choice of, the want of vessels on the lake depriving us of all means of obtaining any

¹Latour's statements are generally accepted as authoritative and have in the main been used by historians much as original records. Adams himself, though contradicting them whenever he pleased, regarded them as reliable sources. Latour's memoirs are not generally read today and a literal quotation for this reason is given.

certain intelligence of his movements, before he could effect his landing.

"Captain Newman of the artillery, who commanded the fort of Petites Coquilles, which stands at the inner entry of the pass of the Rigollets, towards lake Pontchartrain, was positively ordered to defend his post to the last extremity, and in case of his not being able to hold out, to spike the guns, blow up the fort, and evacuate the post of Chef-Menteur.

"Captain P. Jugeant was authorized to levy and form into companies all the Chactaw ¹ Indians he could collect.

"On the 15th the commander-in-chief informed generals Coffee, Carrol and Thomas of the taking of the gun-boats, by letters sent by express, urging them to use all possible speed in marching to New Orleans with the troops under their command.

"General Winchester, commanding at Mobile, was also informed of the loss of our naval force, and it was earnestly recommended to him to use the greatest vigilance in protecting the vicinity of that town, as the enemy might endeavour to make an attack in that quarter.

"On the 16th general Jackson wrote to the secretary of war, apprizing him of the capture of the gun-boats; he expressed to him his concern for the consequences that might attend that event, which he apprehended might happen, when he wrote to government suggesting the propriety of giving the necessary orders for finishing the

¹ Choctaw.

block-ship building at Tchifonte, and when he gave orders for supplying forts Strother, Williams and Jackson, with six months provisions. The general apprehended lest the interruption of our communications by water with Mobile, might be attended with consequences fatal to the safety of the country. He however assured the secretary of war that, should the enemy effect a landing, he would, with the help of God, do all he could to repel him. He also informed the secretary that neither the Tennessee troops nor those of Kentucky had yet arrived, but that they were daily expected and that in the meanwhile he was putting the river below the city in the best possible state of defense. He acquainted him with the taking of the post of the Belize, with all the pilots, and a detachment of troops that was there stationed, but he informed him at the same time of the establishment of martial law, and of the rising of the militia in mass. 'The country,' said the general, 'shall be defended, if in the power of the physical force it contains, with the auxiliary force ordered. We have no arms here—will the government order a supply? If it will, let it be speedily. Without arms, a defence cannot be made.'

"During the summer, while yet among the Creeks, General Jackson had made a requisition of a quantity of arms, ammunition, heavy cannon, balls, bombs, &c. to be sent to New Orleans; but such was the fatality that appeared to be attached to all the measures adopted for our defense, that

it was not till the middle of January, 1815, that a very small proportion of what had been ordered, arrived at New Orleans.

“A special law of the state had, some time before, authorized the formation of a battalion of free men of colour; and we have seen that it had already taken the field under the command of Major Lacoste, and had been stationed at Chef-Menteur. Colonel Michael Fortier, senior, respectable and worthy citizen of New Orleans, having the superior command of all the corps of men of colour, presided over the levying of a new battalion of the same description, formed by the exertions and under the direction of the gallant captain Savary, who had acquired an honourable and distinguished reputation in the wars of St. Domingo. It was chiefly with refugees from that island, that colonel Savary formed that battalion, whose officers were immediately commissioned by the governor of the state; and its command was confided to major Daquin of the 2d regiment of militia. . . .

“The capture of the gun-boats was announced to the senate and house of representatives of the state, by a message from the governor: ‘I lay before you,’ said he, ‘a letter addressed me by commodore Patterson, announcing the capture of five of the United States gun-boats of the New Orleans station, by a vastly superior force of the enemy. The length of the combat is a proof of the valour and firmness with which our gallant tars maintained the unequal contest, and leaves

no doubt that, although compelled ultimately to strike, their conduct has been such as to reflect honour upon the American name and navy. The ascendancy which the enemy has now acquired on the coast of the lake, increases the necessity of enlarging our measures of defence.'

"Commodore Patterson addressed a second letter to the governor, in which he complained of the want of seamen to man the armed vessels then at New Orleans, and requested the support and assistance of the state authorities. This letter was laid by the governor before the legislature, who, on the -- day of December, passed a resolution giving a bounty of twenty-four dollars to each seaman who would enter the service of the United States for three months, and to this end placed at the disposition of the governor six thousand dollars. The governor forthwith issued his proclamation. Between seventy and eighty sailors received the bounty of the state, and were of the number of those brave tars who, by their incessant fire from the ship *Louisiana* and the schooner *Carolina*, so annoyed the enemy in all his movements, and so particularly harassed him on the night of the 23d of December, as will be seen hereafter.

"On the 18th of December, general Jackson reviewed the New Orleans militia, the first and second regiments, the battalion of uniform companies under the command of major Plauché, and part of the free men of colour. Addresses were read to them, and answered with acclamations of

applause. My voice is too weak to speak of these addresses in adequate terms; I leave the reader to form an idea of the effect they must have produced on the minds of the militia, from the impression that the mere perusal of them will make on himself. These corps had two days before entered upon actual service, and did regular duty like troops of the line. On the 18th, Plauché's battalion was sent to bayou St. John, and the major took command of that post.

"A general order of this day enjoined all officers commanding detachments, outposts, and pickets, on the approach of the enemy, to remove out of his reach every kind of stock, horses, &c. and provisions; and directed them upon their responsibility to oppose the invaders at every point, and harass them by all possible means. It concluded with this animating sentence:

" 'The major-general anticipating that the enemy will penetrate into this district in a few days, requests of the people of Louisiana to do their duty cheerfully, and bear the fatigues incident to a state of war, as becomes a great people, anticipating from the ardour pervading, and the present help at hand, to make an easy conquest of them, and teach them in future to respect the rights of liberty and the property of freemen.'

"The garrison of fort St. John, on lake Pontchartrain, had been reinforced by the volunteer company of light artillery, under the command of lieutenant Wagner.

"By an order of the day of the 19th, the com-

mander-in-chief ordered several persons confined in the different military prisons, for having violated the laws of the country, to be set at liberty, on their offering to take up arms in defence of the country.

“But that favour was restricted to such persons as were within two months of completing the term of imprisonment to which they had been condemned. These and all others not under sentence were, in pursuance of that order, set at liberty by the commanding officer at fort St. Charles, the barracks, and the powder magazines.

“The country being now in imminent danger, it became necessary to adopt the most vigorous measures to prevent all communications with the enemy; and in order that such persons as might be apprehended for having given the British information as to the situation of the country, its means of defense in troops, artillery, fortifications, etc. might not escape punishment, General Jackson wrote to the governor, suggesting to him the propriety of his recommending to the legislature to suspend the writ of *habeas corpus*. As the danger was daily increasing, the general could not, without exposing the safety of the country, whose defence was committed to him, wait till the dilatory forms of deliberation should empower him to take steps necessary for saving it. Nor did it escape his penetration that the legislature was not disposed to second his views, by that energetic measure. The hour of combat drew near, that of discussing, deliberating, and re-

ferring to committees, had gone by. The time called for action and promptitude; and accordingly General Jackson proclaimed martial law, and from that moment his means became more commensurate with the weight of responsibility he had to sustain. The object of his commission was to save the country; and this, he was sensible, could never be effected by half-measures. It was necessary that all the forces, all orders, all means of opposition to be directed against the enemy, should receive their impulse from the centre of the circumference they occupied. They ought to be radii, diverging from one and the same point, and not entangling chords intersecting that circumference and each other. From the moment martial law was proclaimed, everything proceeded with order and regularity, nor did any of our means prove abortive. Every individual was stationed at his proper post. The guard of the city was committed to the corps of veterans and fire-engine men, who were to occupy the barracks, hospitals, and other posts, as soon as the troops of the line and the militia should be commanded on service out of town.

“The privateers of Barataria,¹ and all persons

¹Of these privateers Gayarré in his *History of Louisiana* says: “. . . John and Pierre Lafitte, ... were originally from Bordeaux, or, according to other reports, from Bayonne, but, emigrating from their native country, had settled in New Orleans as blacksmiths. Tempted by the hope of making a speedier fortune than by continuing to hammer on the anvil, they abandoned the honest trade they were engaged in for one of a more dangerous character, but promising a life of excitement, which was probably more congenial to their temperament, and which held out to them ample compensation for the perils

arrested for, or accused of, any infraction of the revenue laws, sent to tender their services to general Jackson. Mr. J. Lafitte, adhering to the line of conduct he had marked out for himself, and from which he had never deviated from the beginning of September, when the British officers made him proposals, waited on the commander-in-chief, who, in consideration of the eventful crisis, had obtained for him a safe conduct from Judge Hall, and from the marshal of the district.

"Mr. Lafitte solicited for himself and for all the Baratarians, the honour of serving under our banners, that they might have an opportunity of proving that if they had infringed the revenue

they were to encounter. They began with being the agents of the Baratarian buccaneers in New Orleans, and ended with being their leaders, and being proclaimed outlaws by the country where they resorted for illicit purposes.

"On the coast of Louisiana, west of the mouth of the Mississippi, there is an island called Grande Terre, which is six miles in length and from two to three miles in breadth, running parallel with the coast. Behind that island, about six miles from the open sea, there is a secure harbor which is reached by the great pass of Barataria, in which there are from nine to ten feet of water. This harbor communicated with a number of lakes, lagoons, bayous, sea-outlets, and canals, leading to the Mississippi, and which, skirted by swampy forests, and forming a labyrinth of waters, offered a tempting field of operation to the Robin Hoods of the sea. . . .

"The Government of the United States had attempted several expeditions against them, but of so feeble a character as to be necessarily abortive. Whenever any attack was meditated against the buccaneers, they seemed to be mysteriously informed of the coming danger, and in time to avoid it. On such occasions, they would break up their settlement and carry it to some unknown part of the coast; should the new quarters be discovered and threatened, they were transported elsewhere; and the buccaneers would invariably return to the places formerly occupied by them, as soon as evacuated by their foes. It was even rumored, and believed by many, that the pursuers never had any serious intention of capturing the pursued."

laws, yet none were more ready than they to defend the country and combat its enemies.

"Persuaded that the assistance of these men could not fail of being very useful, the general accepted their offers.¹ Some days after, a certain number of them formed a corps under the command of captains Dominique and Beluche, and were employed during the whole campaign at the lines, where, with distinguished skill, they served two twenty-four pounders, batteries Nos. 3 and 4. Others enlisted in one or other of the three companies of mariners, raised by captains Songis, Lagaud, and Colson. The first of these companies was sent to the fort of Petites Coquilles, the second to that of St. Philip, and the third to bayou St. John.

"All classes of society were now animated with the most ardent zeal. The young, the old, women, children, all breathed defiance to the enemy, firmly resolved to oppose to the utmost the threatened invasion. General Jackson had electrified all hearts; all were sensible of the approaching danger, but they awaited its presence undismayed. They knew that in a few days they must come to action with the enemy, yet calm and unalarmed they pursued their usual

¹It was doubtless to a large extent due to the influence of his brilliant friend and adviser, Edward Livingston, to whom the Republic of Carthage and Grande Terre in Baratavia Bay were no new names, as well as to his own keen ability to seize an opportunity that Jackson so easily forgave the old sea rover his many trespasses against law and order and engaged his services in defense of the city. This service was destined to make for Lafitte a lasting name among the heroes of dramatic episodes in Southern history.

occupations interrupted only when they tranquilly left their homes to perform military duty at the posts assigned them. It was known that the enemy was on our coast within a few hours sail of the city with a presumed force of between nine and ten thousand men, whilst all the forces we had yet to oppose him amounted to no more than one thousand regulars and from four to five thousand militia.

“These circumstances were publicly known nor could any one disguise to himself or to others the dangers with which we were threatened. Yet such was the universal confidence inspired by the activity and decision of the commander-in-chief, added to the detestation in which the enemy was held and the desire to punish his audacity should he presume to land, that not a single warehouse or shop was shut nor were any goods or valuable effects removed from the city. At that period New Orleans presented a very affecting picture to the eyes of the patriot and of all those whose bosoms glow with the feelings of national honour which raise the mind far above the vulgar apprehensions of personal danger. The citizens were preparing for battle as cheerfully as if it had been a party of pleasure each in his vernacular tongue singing songs of victory. The streets resounded with *Yankee Doodle*, the *Marseillaise Hymn*, the *Chant du Départ* and other martial airs while those who had been long unaccustomed to military duty were furbishing their arms and accoutrements. Beauty applauded valour and

promised with her smiles to reward the toils of the brave. Though inhabiting an open town not above ten leagues from the enemy and never till now exposed to war's alarms, the fair sex of New Orleans were animated with the ardour of their defenders and with cheerful serenity at the sound of the drum presented themselves at the windows and balconies to applaud the troops going through their evolutions and to encourage their husbands, sons, fathers and brothers to protect them from the insults of our ferocious enemies and prevent a repetition of the horrors of Hampton.

"The several corps of militia were constantly exercising from morning till evening, and at all hours was heard the sound of drums, and of military bands of music. New Orleans wore the appearance of a camp; and the greatest cheerfulness and concord prevailed amongst all ranks and conditions of people. All countenances expressed a wish to come to an engagement with the enemy, and announced a foretaste of victory.

"Commodore Patterson sent gun-boat No. 65 to fort St. Philip. Lieutenant Cunningham who commanded it had orders to send an armed boat to the Balize, for the purpose of bringing up the custom-house officer, and of ascertaining, if possible, the enemy's force. He was further directed to give to the commanding officer at Plaquemine all the assistance in his power. The commodore ordered captain W. B. Carroll, the officer who had the command of the navy-yard at Tchifonte, to cause the brig Aetna to ascend the

bayou, and take a station opposite the unfinished block-ship, for the defence of the latter, in case of the approach of the enemy. Captain Carroll was further ordered not to suffer any boat to leave Tchifonte for the bayou St. John, without a passport, and in the event of the enemy's entering lake Pontchartrain, not to let the mail-boat pass."

CHAPTER XXIV

BRITISH ARRIVE ON THE MISSISSIPPI

WHILE Jackson was making preparation for a stubborn defense of the city in the manner that has been described by a distinguished participant in the preceding chapter, the British, after sweeping away the slight naval resistance from the Gulf shore, took possession of Lake Borgne and proceeded with much nonchalance to find a landing place for their troops. Their inhospitable reception of the bearers of the flag of truce sent by Commodore Patterson to gain information relative to the officers and members of the crew who had been made prisoners on the gunboats was indicative of an over-strict military spirit that incensed the Americans, though the wounded themselves were found to be well and kindly treated.

There were several routes from which Jackson looked for the enemy to take his choice. Lake Pontchartrain was out of the question on account of *Petites Coquilles*. A likely route, and to Jackson the most probable, was by *Chef-Menteur*,

which led to the Gentilly Plains. So wedded was he to this idea that he strengthened this point with a considerable defense, and who can say that it was not this very preparation which caused the British ultimately to choose a different approach?

The British, having anchored their fleet near the Isle aux Pois, on which they landed a large division, transferred the troops to barges and continued to advance through Lake Borgne, Bayou Bienvenu, and Bayou Masant and effected their first landing at the mouth of Villeré's Canal. A small and straggling colony of Spanish and Portuguese fishermen who used the waters of Lake Borgne and the bayous emptying into it as a fishing ground secretly assisted them in disembarking their troops, also in piloting them over safe pathways. These, furthermore, acted as spies and in connection with disguised British soldiers gathered valuable information for the enemy, making it clear to him that his best advance after landing would be by Villeré's Canal, for the ground along the canal, while soft in places, in the main afforded the best footing, and the water of the canal was sufficient to float small craft. Latour in his execration could name only ten who had been guilty of the treachery of supplying this information.

While the enemy's eight boats were moving up

the canal on the night of the 22nd, their approach brought on a dramatic scene in the great, dark Louisiana delta, whose silence at night was usually broken only by the cry of the panther or the hoot of the owl. An American sentinel reported a different noise; for moving quietly up the bayou through the bare, mid-winter forest could be seen by the pale rays of the December moon a flotilla of barges filled with men. The little American detachment guarding the far outpost, deeming it imprudent to fire on account of the great disparity of numbers, concealed itself behind a log cabin. When the barges had passed, the sentinels at this point determined to give notification of the arrival of the enemy. The first detachment of the enemy while landing discovered and captured a number of these men; a few made their escape and wandered in the tall grass of the low, shifting marsh lands and cypress swamps for a whole day finally to become captives of the British. One of these escaped to the American lines on the road leading from Gentilly to Chef-Menteur, where Jackson had placed Claiborne with a part of his forces. The story goes that the treatment by the British of these prisoners was not in accord with the best military customs. A serio-comic phase of the situation developed when one of the Spanish fishermen captured with

the American party was also detained. Who can be adjudged better than his company?

An exciting incident connected with the landing of the enemy has been preserved by historians. While the British were cautiously arriving about noon of December 23, through the strip of stunted cypress forest and heavy cane-brake on the river, the advance guard entered a beautiful orange grove and came upon the fine plantation house of General Villeré, a spot destined to become a part of the great battlefield. This they, with small credit to their large forces, immediately captured, making prisoners of Major Villeré and a small company of the 3rd Regiment of militia stationed there as guard. This feat was not to be accomplished without stout resistance from Major Villeré, the General's son, who later broke from his confinement and escaped through a window, pursued by a shower of bullets.

While the brave young soldier, in a remarkable experience filled with hazard and adventure, was making his way from the right bank of the river, a kindred spirit, Colonel Denis de la Ronde, commanding the 3rd Louisiana Militia, also escaped from the enemy and reached the American lines from the other bank. We do not vouch for all the many stories told of Major Villeré during

this happening, but we do for the fact that it was in no "volatile" spirit such as has been ascribed to them that these brave young Frenchmen, though taken by surprise, determined to carry in person the news of the enemy's approach to General Jackson.

The true story of General Jackson's first reception of the news of the landing of the British is not presented by Henry Adams and several other historians as creditably to Jackson as he deserves.¹ According to Latour's own account, Colonel La Ronde, who commanded the Louisiana detachment of militia at the Villeré house, sent on the evening of December 22nd, a courier to apprise Jackson of the appearance of several sail in the three bayous behind Terre aux Boeufs. Latour claims that he was sent the next day to verify this report but admits that he met several persons "flying" towards town, who told him that the British had landed, were in possession of Villeré's house and had taken prisoner General Villeré's son. On receiving this news Major Tatum was sent back to the American camp to confirm the story while Latour proceeded to reconnoiter. If the people who were "flying" towards the city did

¹ Adams, "History of the United States," 1801-1817, p. 343. Latour says relative to this matter that reconnoitering parties were sent out constantly by Jackson before and on the 22nd to watch the movements of the enemy, pp. 83, 84.

not stop in their flight, they or Major Tatum were the first to apprise Jackson that the courier's report sent by Colonel La Ronde that the enemy had been seen approaching the land was true. On the 22nd, then, Jackson had news of the direction of their approach and the hour they might effect a landing was a contingency expected and awaited.

That Jackson was prepared to the best of his ability and means to meet the British is shown by the fact that he attacked them immediately on landing. Not until he was certain of their final choice as to a landing place would he go to meet them, for an attempt at landing might prove only a feint and by acting precipitately Jackson knew he might endanger the city at some other point.

Jackson had now about 4,000 troops gathered from Tennessee, Mississippi, Kentucky and Louisiana, an untrained but heroic band that, thrilled with the spirit of high adventure, was about to conquer an army hitherto invincible, though tested in many hard-fought European campaigns. They had been stationed up the river above New Orleans, to be summoned when needed. He might have stationed them closer, but the very fact that he had placed this strong force in the west above New Orleans is conclusive proof that he knew he would have to defend the city. The

fact of his attacking the instant the enemy landed proves, too, that his defense was not the haphazard affair that has been ascribed to him by some historians.

With special reference to troops from the Mississippi Territory, it may be noted that there was a large number of Mississippi volunteers scattered through the various commands. The 3d United States Regiment had again been recruited at Cantonment Washington by Mississippi volunteers, the 44th Regiment contained Mississippi riflemen and infantry which had been with Jackson throughout the Coast Campaign. Many were to be found in General Coffee's Brigade, while volunteers were daily arriving from the Mississippi Territory to be formed into companies with Louisiana troops or placed in other commands. The Mississippi Dragoons, composed of four troops of horse before the campaign closed, were at all times present during the conflict ready to perform the many arduous duties required of them. We have already seen how every man in the Mississippi Territory within military requirements had eagerly participated in the defense of his country during the Creek War and had nobly borne the brunt of the hostilities in camp and at home. They were now ready to assist in the

defense of New Orleans with the same zeal and courage.

The Dragoons, under Major Thomas Hinds, after a march over muddy roads for four days, arrived in New Orleans.¹ M. W. Trimble, a member of the Jefferson Troop and the best authority on the part taken by the Dragoons, in his *Memoirs* states that they arrived on the night of the 22nd; later writers say they reached the city on the afternoon of December 23d and halted at what is at present Lafayette Square.

Amid a storm of cheers from both women and men crowding the sidewalks the spirited Dragoons galloped down Royal Street in obedience to a hurried order from General Jackson on the afternoon of the 23rd to reconnoiter the British camp. With 100 of his gallant troopers and Colonel Hayne, Inspector-General of the Army, Major Hinds galloped out of the city, neared the enemy's position and dashed into his pickets, throwing him into such a state of confusion that Colonel Hayne was enabled to make an estimate of his strength, immediately reporting it to Jackson to be about 2,000. It was on this occasion, Trimble records, that they captured about 60 of

¹On this forced march Trimble states that Major Hinds and his command rode two hundred and sixty miles in four days, the road lying partly through the forest and in places obliterated by the winter rains.

the enemy, the most notable feat so far in the defense of the city. During this hazardous service one of the dragoons was seriously wounded and several horses were killed.

Jackson, though brandishing a thirsty lance, was not quite ready, as he expressed it, "to meet the enemy." It was a crisis where chances could not be taken, and not until the right moment would he give the signal for his army to advance upon the British, whom he determined to attack that night in their first stronghold. The army was held ready to move at a moment's notice and consisted of many of his best troops. In his report to the Secretary of War, December 27th, in enumerating the forces with which he attacked the enemy, he placed Major Hinds' Dragoons first on the list, the fact being noted here to show his reliance on these troops.

The British had little difficulty in landing their troops. While confident of success they were led, through sagacious American prisoners and also through Mr. Shields, a purser in the United States Navy, and Dr. Murrel, both of whom had been the bearers to them of the flag of truce in behalf of the prisoners taken in the naval engagement, into the error of expecting that a force of 18,000 men would confront them when they moved against the city. But believing that they

had surprised Jackson, after casting about for several hours—a hesitation that proved fatal to success—they somewhat leisurely began preparations for battle. The English colors had been hoisted on the tree tops and the strains of “God Save the King” now floated out on the raw winter air. The house of General Villeré was occupied as headquarters while the open lands around it were rapidly filling up with redcoats numbering fully half of General Keane’s division, the other half arriving later during the midnight battle. Sir Edward Pakenham, Commander-in-Chief, had not yet arrived. The first division disembarking including the light brigade of Colonel Thornton, comprised various large regiments, detachments of sappers and miners and the rocket-brigade. The second disembarkation landed the famous 21st, 44th, and 93rd Regiments of the Royal North Britain Fusileers, besides a number of artillerymen, amounting in all according to Latour to 4,980. This number is disputed by some English historians.

Great excitement prevailed in the city. Small parties were constantly making their way towards the town to inform the inhabitants of the arrival of the enemy in large numbers, and old men, women and children lingered anxiously in the

streets and on door-steps to hear the comment of each passer-by.

Proclamations, signed by Admiral Cochrane and General Keane, and posted along the fences and on farm houses everywhere near the British camp, contained many strong inducements to the people to withdraw their allegiance from the American government. The large element of foreign population in New Orleans and the spirit of secession manifested throughout New England, which had been widely commented on by the press of the day, had given them the impression that the people of the new State of Louisiana would in all probability prove disloyal to the Republic.

Among the many stories afloat news had spread everywhere that Major Villeré and Colonel Denis de La Ronde with the 3rd Louisiana Militia stationed at the Villeré house had been captured and were held as prisoners. This and many other statements filled the people with the gravest apprehension. But every heart now trusted in the great Jackson who, like the bald eagle joyfully beating its wings against Appalachian peaks, seemed to revel in the thought of the unequal contest awaiting him. As much a votary of freedom as Patrick Henry, his genius and emotions were in full play at this crisis and one could

readily believe that he was a true descendant of the Bruce. Communicating his rough exuberance of spirit to his small army and stirring it with appeals such as rarely fail to arouse in men a high tide of ardor he now had the satisfaction of seeing his men eager for the most daring exploits. None knew better than he the numerical weakness and lack of training of the raw soldiery that was to be pitted against the trained legions of the British army, and his fixed resolve revealed in his burning avowal to "die in the last ditch" rather than to see the enemy victorious might have easily been construed as meaning that he intended to lay the city in ashes rather than surrender it to the foe.¹ Always dramatic, he shifted readily from an intensely composed manner to one highly gesticulative. It was in the last mood that he now gave orders to his army, although only a few hours before he had remarked in tones thoroughly composed and repressed, "Gentlemen, the British are below; we must meet them tonight."

¹It was feared by many property owners in New Orleans that Jackson from various heated statements made about this time meant to burn the city if he was forced to retreat. This fear, however, it is clear did not affect the loyalty of the Louisiana troops in the field.

CHAPTER XXV

NIGHT BATTLE OF THE 23RD OF DECEMBER

ABOUT five o'clock in the afternoon of December 23rd, Jackson began moving his forces out of camp to attack the enemy.

Knowledge of the activity of the British, communicated to him continually, served to deepen the determination in his voice as he fiercely proclaimed that he would drive the invaders out of the country. His heated declaration, "By the Eternal they shall not sleep on our soil," soon became the army slogan.

It has already been seen that Governor Claiborne for fear of a double attack had been stationed with the 1st and 4th Regiments of Louisiana militia and the Volunteer Company of Horse under Captain Chauveau in the Gentilly plain to protect the city on the side of Chef-Menteur. Major Plauché's battalion was stationed at Bayou St. John. General Coffee, in command of the left of Jackson's army, with his Tennessee Brigade, the Mississippi Dragoons and mounted riflemen under Major Thomas Hinds led Jackson's forces in the night attack, piloted by

the gallant Colonel La Ronde who was now a member of Beale's company. In addition to Hinds', Coffee's and Carroll's troops, the attack on the night of December 23rd was made by the 7th Regiment under Major Pierre and the 44th Regiment commanded by Captain Baker, the latter having been recruited from the streets. Other forces included the uniformed company of militia under Major Plauché, 18 Choctaw Indians under Captain Pierre Jugeant, 200 Santo Domingo negro troops under Major Daquin and a detachment of artillery directed by Colonel McRea with two 6-pounders under command of Lieutenant Spotts, also a detachment of marines stationed at the right wing of the army. The left wing of the army, commanded by General Coffee, contained the Orleans Rifle Company under Captain Beale. The whole number engaged in this first battle in defense of the city did not exceed 2,000, many of them being raw recruits and poorly armed for actual battle. These were to be pitted, before the first conflict ended, against a much larger force of well-armed, trained and seasoned British soldiery. With his small but determined little band Jackson moved down the river towards the enemy's camp about seven o'clock and immediately began disposing his troops for action. The schooner *Carolina* with

Captain Henley was ordered to drop down and take position across from the enemy. Commodore Patterson boarded her and remained throughout the battle.

Of the movements of the American Army Latour says:

“About nightfall the left entered on La Ronde’s plantation and took position in the back of it on its boundary with Lacoste’s. The right formed on a line almost perpendicular to the river stretching from the levee to the garden of La Ronde’s plantation and on its principal avenue. The artillery occupied the high road supported by a detachment of marines. On the left of the artillery were stationed the Seventh and Forty-fourth of the line, Plauché’s and Daquin’s battalions and the eighteen Choctaw Indians commanded by Captains Jugeant and Allard forming the extremity of the right wing towards the woods. The superior command of the battalions of militia was given to Colonel Ross.”

The British having without opposition reached the Mississippi at a point about nine miles from the city were known to be very confident, and the small American force felt that the first encounter would be a desperate one, staged as it was at night and on low ground cut up by canals and ditches. But with their commander’s fiery appeals ringing in their ears, the Americans awaited with

impatience the signal from the schooner *Carolina* which the British had supposed to be an ordinary river boat. At half past seven the *Carolina*, now commanded by Commodore Patterson, dropped down the river and opened upon the British camp a galling and unexpected fire. Extinguishing the fires in their camp the British replied with a volley of musketry followed by Congreve rockets, but without especial effect. The schooner with her guns at full play for a half hour was so destructive that the enemy was compelled to abandon his camp.¹ Jackson's mood by this time had become deadly quiet, and as the little army drew up in a final position to meet the foe orders were whispered from officer to officer.

General Coffee, who had been instructed to turn the enemy's right, while General Jackson himself with the remaining force would attack his strongest position on the left, now advanced from the back of the La Ronde plantation. Leaving his horses he ordered the division forward so as to fall on the British flank and rear. He was closely followed by Beale's company. His division in an extended line was now drawn up between the Lacoste and Villeré plantations with Major Hinds and his cavalry stationed near the middle of the

¹ The *Louisiana* was not in position to take part in the battle. The *Carolina* occupying a position on the edge of the batture three hundred yards away faced the British camp.

latter plantation ready for any service that cavalry could perform at night. When the order to advance and fire upon the enemy was given Coffee's whole line promptly and with perfect precision moved forward and emptied their rifles, the division advancing rapidly and driving the enemy before it. The entire company under Captain Beale taking the foe completely by surprise dashed into his camp, a number of men being captured in the daring feat. General Jackson at the same time advanced from the right in a fierce charge against the British lines posted on the levee, the enemy contending more stubbornly at this point. A heavy enfilading fire from the schooner *Carolina* in the face of a five-gun battery of the enemy was now incessant and delivered at the very nick of time. It is not clear that the British used their artillery on the night of the 23rd, though they had mounted cannon and 150 artillerists were present.

Swept by the heavy fire of Patterson's guns, confusion soon spread in the British ranks and all regular organization was lost as the American forces joined and concentrated their infantry fire with that from the *Carolina*. Encircled by a galling fire, blinded in the night by smoke and flame, their outposts battered to pieces, their camp swept with shot and shell, and confusion reigning every-

where, the British fell back towards the river. Though reinforced by fresh regiments from Lake Borgne they made no further attempt to advance that night.

The quiet, almost silent manner in which the Americans began the attack and the precision with which they obeyed orders at night while facing a strong foe would have reflected credit on the best trained troops. The British commanded by Major-General Keane resisted the attack with 4,980 men composed of part of the 85th Regiment, part of the 95th Rifle Corps, a detachment of the Rocket Brigade, the 4th Regiment, the 21st Regiment of Royal North Britain Fusileers, the 44th and 23rd Regiments, besides numerous sappers, miners and artillerymen.¹

This strong army had met the onrush of the American forces with a spirit equally as eager for battle, and with no small contempt. But surrounded and outmatched by Jackson's daring and strategy, they were forced to give way at every turn, both armies stubbornly contending often in hand to hand conflict. The British finally abandoned the struggle about 10 o'clock. They had

¹Latour, *p.* 104. Later historians have greatly reduced this number. William James in his *Military Occurrences of the Late War*, places it at 2,050, while Theodore Roosevelt makes it 2,310 and Adams even less. Latour includes several pieces of cannon in his estimate of the strength of the British on the night of the 23rd. See *p.* 94.

suffered much during the fierce combat and vexed and chagrined returned to their camp without victory. They spent the night resting on their arms, entertaining for the first time some anxiety as to their easy success in attacking the city.

The heavy smoke and fog that gathered over the battle ground in the night, obscuring the position of the various corps, caused General Jackson to await further attack until morning. He had successfully attacked but had not overwhelmed his foe and this he knew full well. His small force of 2,131 men remained on the cold and muddy field for a few hours and at four in the morning assumed a stronger position near the city. Major Hinds with his dragoons was placed on guard between the two armies where he remained throughout the entire night.

The following extract from a letter written by M. W. Trimble, an eyewitness, gives an interesting account of the devotion and faithfulness of the Mississippi Dragoons in the defense of the country and of the City of New Orleans throughout the Christmas season:

“Our squadron,” the author says, “was not in action on the 23d but were on the ground, since from the darkness of the night the cavalry was unable to act. Our duty since then has been very hard, as we have not unsaddled our horses since, but lay at their feet every night on our arms and

without fires. After the battle our squadron was stationed between the two armies as picket guards, and lay three days within four hundred yards of the enemy's chain of sentinels and in the morning of the fourth day (December 28th) were compelled to retire to the main army, the enemy under cover of the night having erected batteries on the levee, and in the morning opened upon us, but did no execution except one horse killed and as we retreated they followed and made three attempts to charge our breastworks, but were as often repulsed, and were again compelled to retire, with a loss of about one hundred and fifty killed. On our part, the number in killed and wounded did not exceed twenty. To-day we have been endeavoring to draw them out, but without success, for which purpose our noble commander, Major Hinds, drew his squadron within two hundred yards of their lines, which drew their fire pretty heavy, and wounded three men and two horses. . . . We were kept there for one hour and a half by our major, who put us through a number of evolutions in the face of the enemy, to the astonishment of all the army, and when we returned to camp were met by three cheers from the army, and General Jackson's compliments, presented to us through one of his staff, Colonel Hayne, who said to us, 'Gentlemen, your undaunted courage this day has excited the admiration of the whole army.' "

In the action on the night of the 23rd the 7th Regiment, commanded by Major Pierre, con-

ducted itself with great gallantry and very naturally receives from Latour the warmest praise. The 44th Regiment, also, distinguished itself under the command of Captain Baker. This, with General Coffee's gallant Tennessee brigade and all other troops in action, received the highest commendation of General Jackson. It was always characteristic of him to applaud the individual acts, exploits and achievements of those serving under him, and he rarely lost an opportunity of strengthening and inspiring the rank and file of his army through its superior officers. Among the brave officers who were especially commended by him in his report of the 23rd, along with Coloneis Butler and Piatt, was Major Chotard of the Mississippi Territory. Their intrepidity, he claimed, saved the artillery. Tennessee and the Mississippi Territory suffered a loss in Colonel Lauderdale¹ of General Coffee's brigade who fell while heroically repulsing the enemy. In this first encounter the American loss according to Latour was 24 killed, 115 wounded, and 74 made prisoners. The British loss was 400 killed, 167 wounded and made prisoners.²

¹ Colonel Lauderdale at this time was a resident of the Mississippi Territory. Mississippi and Alabama each later named a county in his honor.

² The official British report makes their loss 305 killed, wounded or prisoners.

Brigadier-General David Morgan, who commanded a detachment of Louisiana drafted militia in cantonment at the English Turn, hearing of the arrival of the enemy on Villeré's plantation and finding it difficult to withstand the solicitation and impatient entreaty of his troops, marched against the British though without orders. Latour, an eye-witness, in his "Historical Memoirs" gives a highly creditable account of the conduct in the affair of December 23rd of General Morgan and his troops, whose initiative and courage were conspicuous.

During this first battle with the British, General Jackson's personal bearing was beyond criticism. His strategy, firmness, composure and disregard of personal danger in the face of fierce resistance and his skill and ardor in directing and urging his troops forward amid the fury of the battle, called forth praise from all who witnessed the engagement. He had now become the idol of his army, his strong and singular personality possessing a charm for nearly all with whom he came in contact.

CHAPTER XXVI

MOVEMENTS OF BOTH ARMIES FOLLOWING THE
NIGHT OF DECEMBER 23; MAJOR THOMAS HINDS
IN COMMAND OF JACKSON'S CAVALRY

THE spirited attack on the British by the Americans on the night of December 23rd is thought by many to have made possible the easy victory of January 8th. The blow delivered the English troops so soon after disembarkation was such as to disconcert their plan for an immediate attack on the city, which might have been carried out had they not received this decided check.

General Jackson knew that the city protected in all by barely 5,000 men, many of whom were inexperienced backwoodsmen not even acquainted with the proper use of the bayonet would without the greatest strategy and resistance become a rich booty of the enemy. His little army was astir by four o'clock in the morning. A force composed of the Mississippi and Feliciana Dragoons with the 7th Regiment commanded by Major Hinds was left near La Ronde's place to keep an eye on the movements of the enemy, the Dragoons being

posted as sentinels from the levee to the swamp close to the British lines where they remained until daylight. Through the gray dawn the faithful sentinels saw a field strewn with the enemy's dead and wounded which were being silently cared for by faithful comrades. The American dead and wounded were removed to the city, the sight arousing a deeper hatred for the foe.

On the morning of December 24th scouting parties of the Jefferson Troop of the Mississippi Dragoons reported that the British had formed into position between the levees three hundred yards from La Ronde's boundary with the evident purpose of giving battle. A little later their lines broke and they returned to camp evidently deeming themselves unready for an engagement with a foe that had given them such a warm reception the night before. For the first few days they busied themselves in disembarking more troops and supplies at Isle aux Pois and transporting them to the river. Major Hinds, on whom Jackson now depended for knowledge of the enemy's movements, soon discovered that Lacoste's plantation was literally overrun with red coat and tartan while their sentries were posted as far out on the roads as discretion permitted. Jackson had decided not to attack the large British army again in the open. In the midnight con-

ference he and his engineers decided to fortify the army behind breastworks five miles out from the city along Rodriguez's Canal and running along the limits of Rodriguez's and Chalmette's plantations with the McCarty house for headquarters. This canal was sometimes called the old Mill Race and had long since fallen into disuse.

To the small American army, constructing with might and main along Rodriguez Canal what was to become one of the most famous breastworks of history and mounting cannon along its rugged front, the invaders seemed, indeed, a formidable foe.¹ Large companies of British troops were massing everywhere in the open plantations and the ditches were rapidly filling up with infantry. A sagacious order of General Jackson to cut the levee and flood the foreground of the Chalmette plantation in front of his lines unfortunately failed on account of the low water on that day, which was unusual for the season. Every strategy possible was resorted to by the Commander-in-

¹ The breastwork, which could not have been constructed with any hope of success before the British landed and selected their line of battle, was built of every conceivable material, including fence rails, staves and rafters and in some parts even of cotton bales. The latter after a time were discarded on account of being easily set on fire. In the construction of the breastworks, which varied as to height and width throughout, the canal was deepened and widened, the Americans working knee deep in mud and water and using every available help the city afforded, the entire population responding in the most spirited manner.

Chief, for he knew that supreme efforts would have to be made for the protection of the city from invasion by an army that the Duke of Wellington believed strong enough to capture any city in America. Stirred to almost superhuman efforts by the vehemence of their leader, the American army labored feverishly at the earthworks, every ear having caught his burning avowal that he would halt the army of the enemy here or bury himself in their ruins. The skeleton outlines of the three-line defense had taken definite shape by January 8th. The first works on which were mounted the heavy guns made a specially strong barrier. This proved even more formidable than it appeared, for having been built according to individual fancy, high, low, wide, narrow, the British concluded that it would be easy to assault. When finished, however, it made a strong defense against a square, oncoming attack, and it is not too much to say that Jackson knew that it would.

Not less arduous and assiduous in the defense of the city than General Jackson was Governor Claiborne, whose nationalism and devotion to the American government had always been most pronounced and in this crisis was now at white heat. As the second governor of the Mississippi Territory he had been appointed governor of Louisiana and so continued a period of

service that would have easily ushered him into a national career had death not cut him short at the age of forty-two. In these days of peril, though not as self-confident as Jackson, he manifested a spirit of patriotism never surpassed by his Revolutionary ancestors.

The British though recruited by fresh regiments and thoroughly equipped for fighting, continued cautious throughout December 24th. The *Carolina* and *Louisiana* kept up such constant fire that they could scarcely move from cover, both companies and small parties seeking coverts everywhere to escape the accurate aim of the guns from the two vessels. The cavalry under the fearless Hinds reconnoitered their lines constantly through the day, deploying in full view several times, but they offered no resistance to the daring and fearless Mississippians who, led on by their brilliant commander, exhibited a courage that astonished and kept the enemy in continual alarm. The author of "Jackson and New Orleans" gives this vivid description of the operations of the cavalry of the American army during the defense of the city:

"Prominent among the bands which kept the British in perpetual alarm was the command of the indefatigable Major Hinds, whose troopers from Mississippi and Louisiana were ever hover-

ing about the English outposts, charging to the very mouths of the cannon, and driving in their pickets. Unfortunately for the British, so at least they thought, they were unable to mount their dragoons for field or fighting service; and Hinds, having none of his own arm to try his mettle on, was compelled to satisfy his impatient valor in unequal and ineffectual but dangerous, and to the British vexatious, charges on their redoubts and outposts. Hinds was of very great use to Jackson in executing reconnoissances, which he always did with brilliant daring and success. As soon as the British would throw up a redoubt or commence planting a battery in new position, Jackson had only to say, 'Major Hinds, report to me the number and calibre of the guns they are establishing there.' Immediately the stalwart trooper would form his dragoons, and advancing in an easy trot until he had arrived within a few hundred yards of the object of the reconnoissance, would order a charge, and, leading himself, would dash full speed at the enemy's position, as near as was necessary to ascertain their strength and situation, and then wheeling under their fire and shower of rockets, would gallop back to headquarters and report to Jackson all the information he possessed.

"In such incessant scouting parties and volunteer operations as we have described a majority of Jackson's command were engaged during the greater part of the night. So daring were these attacks that on more than one occasion the six-

pounders were advanced from the lines and drawn within cannon shot of the outposts, when they would be discharged at the sentinels or any living object, generally with some effect, and always with great terror to the British camp, causing a general apprehension that the Americans were advancing to attack them in full force."

On December 25th Villeré's plantation was filled with British troops scattered in various positions, the bright hue of their uniforms making brilliant splashes of color amid the live oak, magnolia, and bare, gray cottonwood groves along the river. Their enthusiasm had greatly increased on the arrival of the gallant young commander, Sir Edward Pakenham, who was already distinguished in military circles. Closely connected by marriage with the great Wellington and a soldier by instinct and training, he represented the very bloom of the English army, an army that was later to overcome and send into permanent exile the great Napoleon. Lessons of daring and fortitude learned perhaps in these western wilds and borne across the seas served to animate the heroic spirits that won the field at Waterloo.

Immediately upon his arrival, General Pakenham, who brought with him General Gibbs, took command of his troops and an army, now numbering 5,500, seemingly never looked forward to a

more auspicious outcome. It was on Christmas Day that he found himself in command of a force that by the first week in January had swelled to 8,000 trained men with more constantly arriving. Beyond a handful of raw, half-trained, poorly-armed regiments and a line of rude fortifications lay the rich prize, the fair city of New Orleans that was even then fast becoming the city of Bien-ville's dream. It had been rumored that the American general commanded a strong force in defense of the city, but nothing in its appearance substantiated the rumor and it was with light hearts that the British made preparations as the days passed, the weakness of Jackson's defense becoming more apparent to them each day.

Very little transpired for several days after the night of December 23rd, though the restless Dragoons continued to harass the enemy, at times drawing close enough to his lines to exchange shots, during which feats there was an occasional loss of a brave Mississippian.

A report that the British had landed at Chef-Menteur and were engaged in active operations spread alarm among the troops guarding the Gentilly plain and caused General Jackson to send Major Latour with a detachment of two hundred men to reinforce that point. In this manner he narrowly watched the approaches to the city,

deploying his small force so as to guard all possible entrances. It was now that his skill was mounting to its zenith while that of the enemy had already begun to wane. The British had begun to feel that it was one thing to approach a city and quite another to capture it. Still their contempt for the backwoods general and his straggling army arrayed in uniforms of many colors and patterns, some quite frayed and faded, was very manifest, and in truth it must be admitted that the epithet "dirty shirts" cast at General Jackson's motley regiments seemed somewhat appropriate.

While ready to march against the American lines, Pakenham, who had been greatly annoyed by the *Carolina* and *Louisiana* on the Mississippi, determined first to use his artillery against them. This he had brought in considerable numbers from his vessels and on December 27th, at seven o'clock in the morning his battery of several 12- and 18-pounders and a howitzer began firing on the *Carolina* and after a most strenuous effort succeeded in destroying the plucky little ship. The *Louisiana* would have suffered the same fate had it not been towed up out of reach of the enemy's guns.

It was on the day previous that General Morgan on receiving orders left the English Turn,

sent the artillery to Fort St. Leon, and took position on the right bank of the river opposite Camp Jackson. He was the recipient of an unfortunate order about the same time, instructions from Jackson having caused him to cut the levee near Jumonville's plantation. The flooded canals afforded the British ample water to float up their heaviest artillery, but not enough to render the ground totally unfit for camping. The Americans were now watching every movement of the enemy but still the British had made no move. On the evening of December 27th, however, they moved forward and drove in the advanced guard of the Americans. Pressing forward in heavy columns they took position on the rich plantations of Bienvenu and Chalmette—ground that was to become famous in the history of the world.

CHAPTER XXVII

ENGAGEMENT OF THE 28TH OF DECEMBER

THE night saw great batteries looming up on the river and early on the morning of December 28th a number of splendid companies of British infantry could be seen advancing and pressing back still farther the advance guard of the little American army which had itself fallen back from La Ronde's plantation. The cavalry under Major Hinds in the face of the overwhelming foe continued to reconnoiter his lines, his troops sustaining the heavy fire of all their outposts. It was in one of those desperate, close encounters with the enemy that three heroic Mississippi cavalymen lost their lives while several others were wounded. The 7th Regiment acted with Major Hinds on the occasion and the enemy's sentries and pickets fell so rapidly before their fire that General Pakenham sent a flag to the American commander complaining of the shooting of sentinels as barbaric, as compared with the way European warfare was usually conducted. General Jackson, however, saw in the present hostilities nothing

more than a cruel war of invasion and eyewitnesses record that he made it very plain to the British officers that sentinels of the opposing armies would be running great risks to drink out of the same stream. This bit of laconic wit doubtless called forth many a lusty guffaw from his soldiers and while he was in quite as deadly earnest as was Pakenham he could still swap jokes with his men on such occasions.

As the dawn threw its struggling light through the thickly draped folds of gray fog the enemy continued to advance against the American lines, preceded by heavy artillery which divided its fire between the *Louisiana* and Jackson's lines. The British, hardened Peninsular veterans, both tar-tan and redcoat, were now in good spirits, their hearts beating high with expectation of victory. As Subaltern very naïvely admits, when not charged by Hinds' Dragoons, they regarded their passage into the city somewhat in the light of a royal entrance.

It was about this time that Jackson ordered the blowing up of all buildings on the Chalmette plantation which protected the enemy.¹ The same

¹ The manner in which the Chalmette buildings were fired is interestingly told by the English historian Subaltern: "That the Americans are excellent marksmen," says this author, "as well with artillery as with rifles we have frequent cause to acknowledge; but, perhaps, on no occasion did they assert their claim to the title of good artillerymen more effectually than on the present. Scarce a ball passed over or fell short of its mark but

fate was intended for the house on the *Bienvenu* place but its execution failed. The British made much of their artillery as they confidently advanced, their guns cheerily playing upon the *Louisiana*. They little dreamed that as soon as they came within proper range the modest-looking vessel would return a most destructive fire. A few moments later the deep columns pressing upon Jackson's lines with such enthusiasm and confidence were destined to lose position and Pakenham was to witness the fall of many of his bravest men, the silencing of his guns, and the utmost confusion in his ranks. Throughout the destructive flanking fire from the *Louisiana* which wrought such havoc among the British, a terrific fire from Humphrey's battery and Latrobe's 24-pounder was incessantly kept up. Commodore Patterson vividly describes the action in his report to the Secretary of the Navy in the following communication:

"U. S. SHIP LOUISIANA, 4 MILES BELOW

"NEW ORLEANS,

"29TH DECEMBER, 1814.

"SIR,

"I have the honour to inform you that on the morning of the 28th instant at about half past all striking full into the midst of our ranks occasioned terrible havoc. The shrieks of the wounded, therefore, the crash of firelocks, and the fall of such as were killed, caused at first some little confusion; and what added to the panic was, that from

seven I perceived our advanced guard retreating towards our lines—the enemy pursuing; fired shot, shell and rockets, from field artillery with which they advanced on the road behind the levee; sprung the ship to bring the starboard guns to bear upon the enemy; at 25 minutes past 8 A. M. the enemy opened their fire upon the ship with shells, hot shot and rockets which was instantly returned with great spirit and much apparent effect and continued without intermission till one P. M. when the enemy slackened their fire and retreated with a part of the artillery from each of their batteries evidently with great loss. Two attempts were made to screen one heavy piece of ordnance mounted behind the levee with which they threw hot shot at the ship and which had been a long time abandoned before they succeeded in recovering it and then it must have been with very great loss as I distinctly saw, with the aid of my glass, several shot strike in the midst of the men (seamen) who were employed in dragging it away. At 3 P. M. the enemy were silenced; at 4 P. M. ceased firing from the ship, the enemy having retired beyond the range of her guns. Many of their shots passed over the ship and their

the houses beside which we stood bright flames suddenly burst out. The Americans, expecting this attack, had filled them with combustibles for the purpose, and, directing against them one or two guns, loaded with red-hot shot, in an instant set them on fire. The scene was altogether very sublime. A tremendous cannonade mowed down our ranks and deafened us with its roar, whilst two large chateaux and their out-buildings almost scorched us with the flames and blinded us with the smoke which they emitted.”

shells burst over her decks which were strewn with their fragments; yet, after an incessant cannonading of upwards of seven hours, during which time eight hundred shots were fired from the ship, one man only was wounded slightly by the piece of a shell and one shot passed between the bow-sprit and heel of the jib-boom.

"The enemy drew up his whole force, evidently with an intention of assaulting General Jackson's lines, under cover of his heavy cannon; but his cannonading being so warmly returned from the lines and the ship *Louisiana* caused him, I presume, to abandon his project as he retired without making the attempt. You will have learned by my former letters that the crew of the *Louisiana* is composed of men of all nations (English excepted), taken from the streets of New Orleans not a fortnight before the battle; yet I never knew guns better served or a more animated fire than was supported from her.

"Lieutenant C. C. B. Thompson deserves great credit for the discipline to which in so short a time he had brought such men, two-thirds of whom do not understand English.

"General Jackson having applied for officers and seamen to work the heavy cannon on his lines furnished by me, Lieutenants Norris and Crawley of the late schooner *Carolina* instantly volunteered and with the greater part of her crew were sent to those cannon which they served during the action herein detailed. The enemy must have suffered a great loss in that day's action by the

heavy fire from this ship and General Jackson's lines where the cannon was of heavy caliber and served with great spirit.

"I have the honour to be with great consideration and respect your obedient servant,

"DANIEL T. PATTERSON."

During the encounter of December 28th Jackson's land forces were equally as daring and successful in repulsing the enemy. Throughout the whole engagement the British without cessation threw shrieking Congreve rockets into General Carroll's troops, who occupied a part of Rodriguez' Canal. Though exposed on account of insufficient protection by their thin not yet completed breastworks, the Americans suffered only slight loss from the noisy shells that were meant to strike terror to their hearts. In this engagement the 1st Regiment of Louisiana Militia remained on duty during the whole of the action. Captain Dominique and Lieutenant Crawley, commanding Batteries 3 and 4, rendered good service during the battle and served their pieces with the utmost skill and precision, and it was the great destruction the artillery dealt the enemy that caused the heavy death rate in his columns. The loss of the Americans in the affair of December 28th was very slight, numbering in all seventeen killed and wounded, Colonel Henderson, of

the Tennessee Division commanded by General Carroll, being among the killed, a lamentable occurrence due to his misinterpreting orders and carrying his gallant force into the face of a galling fire from the enemy. The British loss was considerable, being estimated between 150 and 200, Latour placing it at near 400. Victory still crowned the Americans. The rejoicings in the army and in the city filled the air with notes as of a jubilate.

If the engagement of December 23rd had not convinced Pakenham of Jackson's determination to resist his advance, the affair of December 28th showed plainly that the Americans, irregular and unorganized as their forces appeared, were not to be daunted by the sight of heavy advancing columns. Nor were they to be alarmed by the shriek of high explosives whose misdirected fire had come to be a subject of comment and amusement on the part of the bearded, long-haired Tennesseans.¹

¹ The Tennessee troops for all their stoicism had a keen sense of humor, nor were they slow to catch the apt phrases that fell from the lips of their superiors. "Sugar hogsheads earthworks," "Christmas Fandango," "Hellish Banditti," "By the Eternal" and that most famous of all, "If I thought the hair of my head knew my thoughts I would cut it off and burn it," all served as subjects for much good laughter among them.

CHAPTER XXVIII

ARTILLERY BATTLES CONTINUE THROUGH FIRST
DAYS OF THE NEW YEAR

MOMENT by moment, unheeding the cold rains, mud and water, Jackson continued to strengthen his position, both breastworks and batteries receiving careful attention. Day after day, through the heavy fogs that veiled the battle lines, the fortifications rose up like huge spectres which as the sun advanced along the horizon faded, the clear morning light revealing the stern defenses of the city. And though the British still doubted the American's ability to cope with them in a serious engagement it seemed that before their eyes everywhere the American batteries were looming up and growing daily more numerous. Supported by the *Louisiana* they constituted a formidable defense which was not yet fully acknowledged by the enemy. Conspicuous among them were two 12-pounders and a 24-pounder which formed the famous Marine Battery.¹

¹The pieces of this battery which rendered such valuable and heroic service in the defense of the City of New Orleans were served, as has been alluded to in the body of the text, by sailors

Commodore Patterson had armed a battery established behind the levee with these heavy guns from the *Louisiana* to protect Jackson's front. A galling fire from this battery caused the British to retire from the Chalmette and Bienvenu houses and remove their camp to the back of the plantations. In vain they strove to keep the outposts sentineled; the Tennessee riflemen picked them off at such a rapid rate that any successful attempt along the river at reconnoissance was in vain. The persistency, too, of the cavalry in the face of heavy guns, was the cause of great surprise and annoyance to the British but of much gratification to Jackson, who knew the value of daring cavalry in moments of danger in heartening a small, poorly equipped army facing a large body of well-organized troops. It was about this time that the adventure of the ditch occurred, an adventure that has been preserved in original narrative by an eyewitness of the feat. Trimble, historian of the Jefferson Troop of which Isaac Dunbar was captain, says:

“Colonel Hinds reported at headquarters that his pickets had detected a strong party of the

from the *Louisiana* who had been gathered from the streets of the city and pressed into service after the capture of the American gun boats. Few of these men spoke the same language and it was largely due to Lieutenant Thompson's care in training them that they rendered such efficient service.

British creeping up a wide and deep ditch traversing the field before us. Some doubt being expressed, he obtained permission to make an immediate reconnoissance. He formed the battalion and said, 'Boys, you see that big ditch! It is full of red coats. I am going over it. Whoever wishes may follow me; whoever chooses to stay here may stay.' He galloped away at full speed with every man close behind him. They leaped the ditch which was crowded with British soldiers, made a circuit in front of the British lines, and charged over the ditch returning, each dragoon, as he bounded over, firing his pistol at the astonished red coats. But they recovered in time to give us a general volley which wounded several of our troop and a number of horses. L. C. Harris and Charles H. Jonisdon each got a bullet in the right shoulder."

It was this close encounter with the enemy and composure in the face of every danger that caused Jackson to always speak of the Mississippi Dragoons in warm, extravagant language. It was also their high courage and almost reckless daring that put spirit into the whole army and won for the gallant commander of Jackson's cavalry the sobriquet, "Old Pine Top," a name given him not alone because of his residence in the

great pine forests of Mississippi but because it was descriptive of his courage and endurance.

In the face of great annoyance from the cavalry the British on December 31st cast up a strong redoubt near the swamp and opened up a terrific fire on the left of Jackson. During the following night the entire army moved forward and when only a few hundred yards from the American lines began throwing up entrenchments upon which they planted heavy siege guns. Their fortifications in a few days assumed a formidable appearance. Within only six hundred yards of the American breastworks they erected three half moon batteries, right, center and left. Thirty pieces of heavy ordnance were mounted upon these and all manner of picked guns brought from the ships. On January 1st, a thick fog usual to the section wrapped the entire plain, hiding every vestige of preparation from view. Secure in the belief that their cannon would sweep away the defenses of the straggling American army, they began opening up a sharp and well-ordered fire. But the American fortifications, to Pakenham's utter astonishment, withstood the fierce attack. Though the British guns roared and flamed and metal amounting to 350 pounds fell in broadsides within the fortifications, damaging to some extent both batteries and guns, the brave defenders of

New Orleans met it with the imperturbable coolness of trained veterans. The heavy, well pitched guns of Jackson made haste to reply to the enemy. Humphreys led the plucky Baratarians and Flaungeac with his volunteer patriots immediately followed. Soon a thunderous fire opened up along the entire line. The British recoiled an instant under the terrific storm but returned immediately in an attempt to turn the American left at the swamp. To their chagrin, they were met by a perfect rainstorm of bullets from Coffee and his riflemen who were always ready to assist the artillery. Noon found the half moon batteries of the enemy's fortifications broken, all the defenses along the levee destroyed, the cypress swamps and laurel groves trampled and torn and the wreckage of battle strewn everywhere. The dismayed British soldiers sought the entrenchments for protection during the remainder of the day and during the night retreated to their camp, many of their cannon left in the mud and mire and the entire army suffering not only from the wet and cold but from hunger and loss of sleep. While the New Year dawning on the Southern capital found the Americans confident and joyful, to the discomfited British there was little in the day to relieve their minds of the memory of their shameful defeat, and humiliation was visible on every coun-

tenance. For sixty hours they had had but little sleep and cut off from food on account of their position, all the while being engaged in a terrific battle with an enemy that fought desperately. Memories of New Year's Day and the warm, well-ordered firesides of Old England no doubt recurred often to their minds during the bitter experience. But they were English soldiers and there was not the faintest trace of cowardice in the souls of the men who had been with Wellington in his famous campaigns. Though Pakenham had news that the American army was hourly increasing, knowing the mettle of his troops, he determined to put his army in order again and with one swift onslaught storm Jackson's lines on both sides of the river, Morgan being in command on the right bank.

General Jackson shrewdly discovered the enemy's plans. His own forces had been strengthened by the arrival of 2,000 drafted men from Kentucky under General John Thomas, 700 of whom were ordered to the front under General Adair. Many of them, half clad and without arms, excited the sympathy of the city and also of the legislature. The citizens of the State immediately took steps to relieve their pitiable condition, the members of the legislature responding eagerly to the call. Patriotism was now working

like a charm in every breast. The women of New Orleans sewed with feverish energy all day and far into the night until uniforms, made often of coarse blankets, were provided for all. The tardiness of the national government in supplying arms and clothing for the soldiers in this section of the country at times brought about grave complications in the defense of the city. But one must not forget that transportation, especially where it concerned the boundaries of the Republic, was most difficult at this period.

We have seen that the batteries on the east bank of the Mississippi were mainly in charge of Humphreys, the Baratarians, Lieutenant Crawley, the veteran Garrigues Flaugeac and Lieutenants Spotts and Chauveau with Patterson's across the river to assist when necessary. On January 6th and 7th Jackson began disposing his land forces between the batteries with a view to meeting the concerted and general attack of the British. His artillery, commanding an advantageous position, played an important part in the defense. His lines five miles out from the city running as has been said along Rodriguez's Canal and the limits of the Chalmette plantation were now being given daily inspection. Taking Latour, the principal engineer for authority, we give here the following distribution of the artil-

lery composed of eight batteries of twelve guns, thirty-two's, twenty-four's and some of smaller size, as it assisted Jackson on the 8th of January. Battery 1, stationed seventy feet from the river, was commanded by Captain Humphreys. The enfilading fire of this battery and the fierce fire of the center batteries were very effective. Battery 2 was commanded by Lieutenant Norris; Battery 3, by Captains Dominique and Bluche; Battery 4, by Lieutenant Crawley; Battery 5, by Colonel Perry; Battery 6, by General Garrigues Flaueac; Battery 7, by Lieutenants Spotts and Chauveau;¹ Battery 8, a small brass carronade placed near the elbow of the line that passed into the wood was in such condition as made it impossible for it to render good service. The artillery here was served by militia of General Carroll's command. The line along this part of the breast-work and through the woods to its extremity was a sheet of mud and water in which Jackson's troops waded knee deep. Though hardly sufficient at one point to withstand concentrated attack heretofore it had been strengthened each day so that by January 7th and 8th it was proof against the cannon of the enemy. Behind

¹ This battery, which became a terror to the British, was mounted with one long brass eighteen pounder and a six pounder. Its heavy fire caused the British to twist their column to avoid the destructive aim.

their entrenchments the Americans waited on the night of January 7th for the approach of the British, in places compelled to stand in ooze and water as they listened to the scathing fire of the enemy throughout the night.

The British, though they had pushed forward, had not passed out of the Bienvenu and Chalmette plantations where they were busy in constructing fascines and scaling ladders, and making final preparations for battle. La Ronde, Bienvenu and Chalmette plains on the 7th presented a brilliant and imposing scene. Staff officers in bright uniforms were riding about everywhere giving orders while large parties of troops were moving heavy artillery forward. All through the night of January 7th, the noise of many hammers could be heard in the construction of batteries.

CHAPTER XXIX

BATTLE OF NEW ORLEANS, JANUARY 8, 1815

GENERAL JACKSON'S line of defense on the east bank of the Mississippi was composed of three lines of breastworks extending from the river to the swamp, each about a mile in length. The first, five miles out from the city was the only important one. The second two miles to the north was on Dupree's plantation, and the third, close to New Orleans, could scarcely be termed a rampart or parapet of any description. The disposition of the American forces along the first line of the fortifications on the morning of January 8th was, if not precisely, very nearly as follows: A company of the 7th Regiment commanded by Lieutenant Ross guarded the redoubt on the river; a detachment of the 44th Regiment which was also in the corps of Colonel Ross under the command of Lieutenant Mazant served the artillery at this point. The New Orleans Volunteer Company of Riflemen was stationed between the river and Battery 1 on the extreme right. The 7th Regiment

came next extending past Battery 3 to the powder magazine; this last along with Battery 2 commanded by Lieutenant Norris had been constructed since the first of January. The 7th Regiment was commanded by Major Pierre and numbered 430 troops. Lieutenant Crawley commanded the battery here and the space between that battery and Battery 4 was held by Major Plauché's battalion of volunteer uniformed companies of Louisiana who had flocked to the defense of the city and Major Lacoste's Louisiana men of color, both numbering about 600 troops. Between Batteries 4 and 5 Major Daquin's battalion of St. Domingo men of color occupied the line, consisting of 150 troops and next in order came the 44th Regiment composed of 240 troops commanded by Captain Baker. The entire line from the 7th to the 44th was under the command of Colonel Ross. Major-General Carroll with his better trained Tennesseans commanded two-thirds of the length of the remaining line. Beyond on the right of Battery 7, commanded by Lieutenant Spotts and Chauveau, were stationed 50 marines under the command of Lieutenant Bellevue. General Coffee's troops which numbered 500 occupied the rest of the line. This ran through the woods and into the swamp and was one of

the most trying positions on the first line.¹ Brigadier-General John Adair supported General Carroll's command with 600 good Kentucky troops and strengthened the line at this place while 400 Kentuckians, poorly armed and clothed, were stationed on the second line near the Dupree place. Colonel Thomas Hinds, now in command of Jackson's whole cavalry, was stationed close by to cover the army's retreat in case of defeat.² Some untrained troops, several hundred in number, were placed in various positions and guards and sentinels were placed behind the troops to prevent any passing out of camp.

This well-calculated disposition of the American troops follows in the main Latour, though other authorities have been followed in a number of instances. Careful historians have estimated Jackson's forces at about 3,900 and Jackson's figures very nearly agree with this estimate, though some historians have been inclined to increase the American forces and reduce the number of British.

¹Latour says in substance that the breastworks here were mere makeshifts without batteries and only an occasional banquette supplied the parapet. Though the woods and swamp were flooded with water, in places knee deep, the troops had been kept here for fear the British would advance through the woods in sufficient numbers to capture the line.

²Bassett in his "Life of Andrew Jackson," Vol I, p. 185, gives a fine account of the activities of Colonel Hinds and his Dragoons in the defense of the city.

The Mississippi troops attached to the various regiments and companies have not been given mention by many historians, owing largely to the fact that they were not, except in a few instances, commanded by Mississippi officers. But they were to be found in large numbers scattered throughout Jackson's army, many of them having been in every battle since the beginning of the Creek War. Jackson himself brought Mississippi militia with his Tennesseans from Pensacola and besides the numerous recruits in the regular army, especially in the 44th and 3rd Regiments, hundreds of volunteers flocked to the defense of the city from many points of the Territory and joined various organizations.

Among these volunteers who came each day, singly and in squads, was the Creek War hero, Sam Dale, of the Mississippi Territory, whose participation in the battle of January 8th is told in the following statement from his diary:¹

"Galloping into the city and down the river, I heard the roaring of the artillery. The battle was in full blast. I gave my horse to an orderly and rushed to the entrenchments."

¹In speaking of the daily arrival of Mississippi volunteers, one of Major Hinds' Dragoons in his diary says: "Our friends, Throckmorton, Breedlove and Richardson are here and I expect will join our troop . . . William Bullet has become attached to General Coffee's staff; also General Poindexter." The last statement is inaccurate; Poindexter was with Carroll.

In something of the same manner hundreds of Mississippians had from day to day joined in the defense of the city, while the cavalry under Colonel Hinds, all historians must agree, was one of the most heartening influences in Jackson's army.¹ No one recognized this more than Jackson himself and the fact that he called upon it so frequently to take the initiative in every arduous and hazardous feat is proof of its superior service. Trimble, who was an eyewitness of the battle, describes the position of the Mississippi cavalry in the following interesting excerpt taken from manuscript sources:

"During the night the note of preparation in the British camp could be distinctly heard. Our troops were in arms and in their proper places at break of day. Our cannon bristled on the breastwork from the levee to the woods behind which was a long line of riflemen. One hundred and fifty yards in the rear sat our grim old Colonel on his charger with the whole of the cavalry. We were placed there to cover our army in the event of its being compelled to fall back to the second position."

It must have been difficult for one of Colonel

¹ Thomas Scott and another Dragoon whose name is not given were the first men wounded in defense of New Orleans. See Parton's "Life of Andrew Jackson," Vol. II, p. 83. Latour and Bassett do not give names but mention the circumstance, and Bassett adds "with fatal effect."

Hinds' temperament to have restrained himself. At a time when men were unused to military discipline one would have expected little better of the impetuous commander than to have plunged recklessly into the battle without orders from anyone, but having by now become a seasoned soldier he was beginning to understand the value of what Kipling in modern times has styled "everlasting team-work." Being always himself a magnetic leader whom subordinates delighted to follow, he now gave heed to the slightest command of his great superior, for whom his romantic and chivalrous nature was fast developing hero-worship. On the morning of January 8th we find him watchful and eager yet calm and self-restrained, giving full proof of the assertion made by Governor Claiborne that he had discovered in him all the talents and requisites of a good soldier.

Little more than a general account of the closing battle of the Coast Campaign will be given and without minute detail as to the further situation of the troops, since their position has already been noted. The night of the 7th had been a memorable one for both armies, and if Pakenham slept little Jackson slept less. Behind his first line trenches his ragged regiments awaited with grim, set faces the splendid British army drawn up for action. Commanded by the favorite of

Wellington and the hero of Salamanca, its divisions, brigades and regiments in gleaming battalia awaited his commands in a proud and confident manner. Not the Iron Duke himself, who was at one time seriously regarded as the one best suited to direct the expedition, could have at this moment thrilled their hearts with more pride than did the gallant young officer to whom it had been entrusted. His former failures had not daunted his spirit and several hours before daylight his deep scarlet lines were closely drawn and a magnificent array of batteries planted along the front of Jackson's line. All was in readiness for the artillery battle that had been planned with a special purpose of preceding the first assault of the infantry. The attack was to be made simultaneously by Gibbs on one flank and by Keane on the other, the latter's forces consisting of 1,200 men.

It was rumored, at least in official circles, that Pakenham was not so sanguine of an easy victory as he studied the position of his army and had, after he had heard General Keane's full report at the late council held on the night of the 7th, expressed fear of defeat. But scorning the taunt of the old sea veteran Admiral Cochrane, who airily boasted, "If the army shrinks from the task I will fetch the sailors and marines from the fleet

and storm the American lines and march to the city—the soldiers can then bring up the baggage,” he accepted the situation with a resolute heart and a spirit of reckless daring that readily communicated itself to his army. Though his troops may not have been posted for the assault just as he preferred, his plan was a well calculated one. His forces were to act in concert with General Thornton’s on the west bank of the river, which when all had arrived consisted of 1,400 well armed and in the main seasoned troops. But Pakenham’s attack was in advance of Thornton’s and the design carefully planned to have the latter capture Patterson’s batteries and turn their long-range guns on Jackson’s flank across the river proved a total failure.

Thornton had great difficulty in landing his men on account of low water and a number of breaks in the banks of the canal which prevented him from launching his boats. But, as if this was not enough to wreck his plan, the eccentric Mississippi, like some partial old god of pagan story, carried them one mile and a half below the place selected for their landing.

Every circumstance seemed to favor the crude frontier army contending for self-preservation and liberty. As in the days when Israel combated the hosts of Sisera it seemed that the very stars

themselves had once more taken part in the affairs of men. It is pleasant to think that by their heavenly intervention the scales were now tilted in favor of the Provence Rose blooming in unconscious beauty in a foreign soil and about to fall under the iron hoofs of war.

Men were approaching a turning point in history, which always means a critical juncture in the world's affairs. The crisis meant much to all, as historians have observed in other words, but more to those who had built in hope the fair city in which to dwell in peace and happiness and now "had everything imperiled."

To many of the bold spirits who had come to withstand the city's capture the contest was largely in the nature of a personal combat to test the prowess of men. To their leader who with wild cries that sounded of the far frontiers urged his fierce pack on, its defense meant patriotism, hope, ambition, and all else that swept him up to eminence in his country's history.

The British charge began on the east bank of the river at 6 o'clock in the morning. Some historians say even earlier, but the foggy winter morning was still dark at six. Through the dim light Jackson's outposts discovered two heavy columns of the enemy moving stealthily forward and cautiously withdrew. Though they had

sought to do so, the effort to conceal their moment of attack on the part of the British was in vain. The faint morning light breaking through the fog revealed their position before they were ready to assault. Two circumstances caused much confusion in their ranks at the very outset of formation. Colonel Mullins, selected to lead the charge, had bungled orders and had to return for the scaling ladders left behind. The other and perhaps more depressing fact was that both Pakenham and Keane knew that Thornton had not been able to act in concert with the action on the east bank of the river. General Pakenham's usual precaution—and for all the reckless daring displayed during the attack he was both cautious and orderly—in this instance availed him little. A flaming Congreve rocket, says Latour, speeding skyward from the skirt of woods near the river, answered instantly by a shot from Battery Number 6, was regarded as the signal for action. The sudden fire from the three strong British batteries posted in full face of the American breastworks was turned first on Jackson's headquarters with the hope that he still occupied it, as had been the case during the bombardment of January 1st. The American guns were roaring instantly in answer to the enemy and immediately the two armies came together in fierce combat, both artil-

lery and infantry breaking into a heavy fire that shook the ground and wrapped the skies in a solid sheet of flame. Coming like swift peals of thunder the guns of Numbers 6 and 7, supported by Jackson's entire line of batteries including Patterson's across the river, burst into full play, hurling a thunderous storm of grape and canister straight into the compact, red columns of General Gibbs that were advancing double-quick towards the part of the breastworks which Battery Number 7 defended, the main point of assault where the British proposed to break Jackson's line. Terrible as was the first blow, the British were now prepared and continued to train their powerful guns upon the American breastworks as their columns steadily advanced.

Soon the famous battle that is to-day considered one of the most exceptional and striking in history was raging in full blast. In a broad double track across Chalmette's wet and miry plains the red lines were drawn in close formation and from the glittering rows of steel regiment after regiment were impatiently advancing. The serried ranks moved forward, not with the light insouciance that characterized their first movements but with rigid forms and lowering brows, braced to meet the rain of lead that swept their lines amid wild cheers from the Americans, whose guns con-

tinued their deadly work. The fierce volleys coming in rapid succession cut large gaps in the stiff red ranks stubbornly advancing. These continued to maintain order until Carroll's Tennesseans and the Kentucky troops under General Adair poured a withering fire into their midst, causing them to hesitate and waver. The dawn was now giving place to full daylight and every movement of the enemy could be observed. In conjunction with the batteries Jackson's forces without a moment's cessation continued to shell the enemy's lines. The troops which composed the right of the British army in the face of the heavy raking fire of both the artillery and infantry began to lose position, companies here and there reeling back in helpless confusion. In a moment they were rallied, to be instantly beaten back by a broadside from the American guns. To add to their confusion they realized that they were without the scaling ladders and were pressing towards a breastwork that had proved to be something more than "a low mound behind a few abattis."¹ But the walls of St. Sebastion and the

¹ The 44th had been detailed to bring the ladders and fascines. When Pakenham discovered that this had not been done he ordered the greater portion of this regiment to return for them, an order that General Gibbs objected to when in the act of making the charge. The confusion caused by the troops leaving and returning to the head of the column gave the American batteries time to rake the British lines in the first moments of formation.

fortifications of Badajoz were still in their minds and, though the blazing artillery thinned their ranks, they continued to press forward.

It was now that the grotesque Baratarians played well their part, adding a heroic chapter to their romantic but heretofore unsavory record. Beneath their cunning touch Jackson's guns roared and flamed. Platoon after platoon, and column after column of the enemy were mowed down, to be instantly replaced by splendid troops who faced the guns with grim, determined mien. Full in the face of the grim Tennessee sharpshooters swarming the parapet, amid shot and shell and half blinded by the gun glare, the British advance reached the American entrenchments. The detail of the 44th, hurrying forward with fascines and ladders, threw these away and began shooting. Thus what had been intended for a bayonet charge upon the American lines became a confused musketry assault. A belch and peal of Jackson's artillery accompanied by a fierce rain of lead from the Tennesseans caused the enemy struggling in the slippery mire and mud beneath the breastwork to break and flee to any shelter that could be found, but not without leaving behind a trail of their dead. Gibbs was almost in a panic as he rallied his men from the ditches and swamps, angrily exclaiming that they

would not follow him as Pakenham rode from the rear and joined him. Annoyed at the very outset of the charge by the failure of the 44th to carry out orders, he had never regained his composure. But now, with Pakenham riding with bared head and shouting to the men, the gallant Gibbs led them once more against the breastwork. The British notwithstanding their fearful predicament in the face of a heavy artillery and infantry fire had made up their minds to take the breastwork. The Americans, wildly cheering each other, eagerly awaited them, their shrill voices shouting "Old Hickory!" over the plains and along the great river.

Everywhere the fearless and magnetic Pakenham was now dashing along his lines, calling to his troops in behalf of England to sustain her past glory and uphold her honor. A stinging sensation and his left arm fell powerless by his side, his steed reared and fell forward dead, leaving the heroic commander barely time to leap from its back. With the deafening scream of the batteries smiting his ears a lurid stream of shot and shell raining about him and his men falling everywhere, he instantly mounted the black Creole pony of his aide and in fierce rapid commands rallied his broken squadrons. Animated by his presence they rushed again towards the fortifica-

tions, trampling their dead and wounded in the mud and mire.

General Keane, discovering the terrible plight of Gibbs' army from his position on the river, charged across the open field to his assistance, carrying his brave Highlanders into the very jaws of death as the batteries swept their pathway.¹ The battle was reaching its height, the guns scorching and withering everything with their hot blast, the dead and wounded piled everywhere, when like a subversion of nature the catastrophe came that went far to quench all hope in the proud British army—the valiant Pakenham riding in the midst of the fury of the battle, wounded but still cheering his men, swayed in his saddle, his right arm grew limp, his horse went down under him and with a last stern command ringing on the smoking air he fell forward into the arms of an aide. Loving hands bore him out of the raging din and blare to a quiet spot beneath an ancient oak along the battles' boundary.² There, doubtless forgetting in the last great adventure the alien air that chilled his mor-

¹ Grace King, in her interesting "History of New Orleans," p. 247, gives a graphic description of the Highlanders' advance across the field to the aid of General Gibbs, in the second charge against the American breastworks.

² This tree was long spoken of as "Pakenham's oak." Later authorities for some reason have pronounced it a pecan that sheltered the commander of the British army in his dying moments.

tal frame and dreaming of kind English skies, he breathed his last in the arms of his faithful aid MacDougal. Nor was his death the only loss England sustained that day. Before the second charge was completed officers of the highest rank fell everywhere, either mortally wounded or killed outright. As the gallant Gibbs, now taking full control of the attack, pressed towards the parapets the Americans wildly cheering continued to hurl back the invaders of their country. Targets merely it seemed for the steady aim of Jackson's guns, the wavering red lines rocked and reeled in helpless fashion as a heavy enfilade almost wiped out General Keane's supporting columns. Thick veils of smoke wreathed the battle ground, through which could be seen the dimly outlined columns struggling, now advancing, now retreating in disorderly manner. The very atmosphere seemed on fire as the flaming cannon plowed wide lanes through their ranks, but still scorning their antagonist the gallant remnant continued their dogged assault, their leaders' fortitude stirring the entire line. Urged on by the quick, sharp commands coming to them through the blinding smoke and glare they rushed forward and made another heroic attempt to storm the American defenses, Gibbs falling mortally wounded twenty yards before the works, while Keane fell wounded

on the edge of the canal, shot in the neck. Major Wilkinson in fearless and triumphant fashion lost his life on the summits of Jackson's fortifications, begging only of his victors to report that he had died like a soldier and an Englishman. As the wrecked columns, wildly retreating, fell back from the breastwork, Jackson's infantry and artillery unmercifully swept their broken lines, the fleeing remnant leaving a red valley in front of Battery 7. After the second charge the last reserve under General Lambert could do no more than cover the retreat.

The British had striven with a heroism full worthy of their renown in history bringing even the wounded into line to rally the right of their shattered army, but after several futile attempts desperately put forth to save it, broken and decimated, it went utterly to pieces. Pursued by screaming volleys of shot and shell the broken lines staggered back across the smoke-wreathed plain, a bewildered mass of tortured, agonizing life. Nor could General Lambert, now in command, rally them to a third general charge.

The Americans, sheltered by their fortifications, suffered little from the enemy, the estimate being only thirteen killed and wounded on the east bank of the river.

The fate of the right of Pakenham's army was

not more dire than that of his left. Here the brave and beloved Renee pressed toward the river with his one thousand eager and determined troops, swept away the American pickets and stormed Jackson's lines, entering, during a fierce hand-to-hand conflict, a half-completed redoubt to remain but a short while. The batteries of Humphreys and Norris of the 7th Regiment commanded this point and the charge had been a fearless one in the face of a galling fire from the American batteries. But none could be more sure of victory than the undaunted leader, who sword in hand gained the parapet of the redoubt with an exultant shout to his men to follow. In another instant he fell dead pierced by a shot from one of Beale's volunteer riflemen. This command defended the extreme end of the line with a valor and patriotism that reflected new honor on its service. The British columns driven out of the redoubt by the fierce fire of the batteries fled back in disorder through the red tide of battle, leaving their dead strewn along the levee and the river.

From the field everywhere shattered and depleted regiments were now retreating in disorder. The proud British army was vanquished; its bugles silenced; its colors trampled in the earth; its guns unable to reply. No longer was heard the fierce battle cry, the shouts of the hurry-

ing columns, the groans of the dying, the ringing of steel upon steel. The Chalmette Plains, covered with more than 2,000 of England's dead and wounded, was soaked in blood.¹ Its orange and live oak groves, in which no bird sang for days, were riddled with shot and shell and the wreckage of battle was strewn in soiled heaps over the landscape.

After the terrible battle that had lasted scarcely more than an hour, the dead, the dying and the wounded could be traced in a long scarlet strip over the plains, and along the levees and bayous, a writhing, disfigured mass that filled the beholder with horror and dismay. Beyond, the great dark forest outlined the river; the long Spanish moss, bedraggled by wind and rain, shrouding the bare limbs of trees, lent an added touch of dreariness to the heart-rending scene.

Historians have found it difficult logically to account for the overwhelming victory, for admitting that the Americans' fighting skill and marksmanship were on the present occasion superior to the British, the material advantage was all on the side of the latter. Had their leaders managed the attack properly the capture of New Orleans would have been certain. The courage and fortitude of the British, however, cannot be

¹ Latour's estimate.

Head Quarters
7. M. District
for

Camp 4 miles below St. Orleans

18. Jan: 1815

The repulse which the enemy met with
on the 8th has I believe proved fatal to their hopes.

Their loss on this day, was prodigious - exceeding
according to their own accounts as well as to ours, 2600.
Amongst those killed were Genl Packenham the com-
-mander in chief, & Major General Jettis who died
the day after the action. Major General Kean was
wounded, but still lives. Their army is at present
commanded by Major General Lambert, who, if I mistake
not, finds himself in a very great perplexity. To advance
he cannot - to retreat is shameful. Reduced to this
unhappy dilemma, I believe he is disposed to encounter
disgrace rather than ruin, & will, as soon as his ar-
-rangements for this purpose are effected, venture to his
shipping. This, at any rate, is the danger to which
many symptoms seem to point. Probably, when it is
attempted to be put in execution I shall accompany
him to short distance.

Fac-simile copy of an original letter in the possession of the Mississippi Department of Archives
and History from General Andrew Jackson to Governor David Holmes announcing the victory
over the British at New Orleans.

Of course there was an occasion in which Providence interfered, immediately, in the affairs of men it seems to have been on this. What but such an interposition could have saved this Country? - Let us mingle our joys & our thanksgiving together.

At a moment when my feelings are thus alive I should do violence to them if I did not hasten to offer you my thanks, as well for the good disposition you have manifested, as for the important services you have rendered.

With the highest respect I
have the honor to be
Sir

Y. very Obedt. St.

Andrew Jackson
Oregon game country.

P.S. I must again entreat that when the vessel with the arms shall arrive at Astoria you will use your best means to have them hastened to this point with the utmost despatch - having the men who had been entrusted with the transportation ^{of them} arrested that to me in confinement.

J. J.

questioned, though they showed no such brilliancy here as in the Peninsular campaign.¹

Never in the history of warfare has there been such rare execution of plans as marked Jackson's defense of the city, nor such inability and helplessness on the part of an adversary. Out of raw militia Jackson had created a strong, well-disciplined army and the American rifleman, cool and collected, proved to be not only a good marksman—a skill gained from much practice as a huntsman in the forests and wilds of the undeveloped country, but in every respect the best type of soldier. And the battle! Many historians have sought to describe it, yet none have painted it in its true colors! Only a Hugo's genius could give it the pictorialization it demands. The story is told here not in the hope of having added anything new but as the climax of the story of the long drawn out struggle for freedom of the young American government on the Southern Coast. In its recital the rapid growth of nationalism in this section of the country may be easily traced.

But to return to the scene of the battle. When the American commanders were assured of victory, cheers and rejoicings rent the air. Jackson

¹Two criticisms of Pakenham have been made by John Spencer Bassett: one for making a frontal attack on Jackson's breastwork, the other for selecting the 44th, known to be incapable, to lead Gibbs' column in the first assault.

was everywhere up and down his breastworks, and amid martial music and a deafening storm of hurrahs lavished praise upon his troops. While the victors were appalled at the numerous dead almost solidly covering the track of the battle, the gay Creole temperament soon asserted itself, the more contained American for the time rivaling him in enthusiasm. The news was speedily conveyed to the city—both men and women crowding into the streets and market-place to receive it. The New Orleans and Plauché's bands that had played with such heroic efforts throughout the battle continued to peal forth strains of martial music, strains that must have fallen strangely on the ears of the wounded and dying among the fleeing remnants of Pakenham's defeated army.

Mingling with the bitter realization of defeat was amazement and wonder. That a handful of untrained, raw recruits had contended victoriously and without loss of numbers with a well-equipped, carefully trained army of twice its strength, the mettle of the soldiers composing it having been tested upon a hundred battlefields of Europe, was a fact difficult to credit. Who could believe what the eye witnessed!

CHAPTER XXX

ENGAGEMENT ON THE RIGHT BANK OF THE RIVER

SOME slight sign of victory had perched upon the British spear across the river, and had Pakenham been able to carry out his full design he might have captured the city in spite of Jackson's efforts. The bad fortune of the American commanders there caused the wildest alarm for a while among the victorious regiments with Jackson and he himself gave way to the unseemly wrath that at times swept away his better judgment. Though their failure has been the subject of bitter controversy among historians a number of eyewitnesses and students of the battle have exonerated all parties concerned. With a mild objection to General Morgan's choice of a line which was entirely too long for the forces at his command—mainly a heterogeneous mass of unarmed militia—Latour has little condemnation for his failure.¹

¹Though failing, as it proved to be, to place his line in the best position, Morgan's courage has been emphatically attested to by such renowned fighters as Roosevelt. See p. 478, "Naval War of 1812."

The forces at this point of attack were known to be poorly armed and physically exhausted, before they went into battle. The defense of the line on the west bank at several places was so meager as to be scarcely discernible and was defended, some historians assert, by only six hundred militia. These conditions, it cannot be denied, contributed largely to the disaster that overtook Morgan's forces on that day, nor could the ablest commander here with an advance of only 400 raw, half-trained militia have withstood 700 fresh, well-equipped regulars in the open.

A more definite summary of the situation on the right bank of the river shows on January 4th General Morgan in command of the Louisiana militia. Colonel Cavelier with the 2nd Louisiana Militia was in camp on an old Spanish plantation. His regiment, composed of only 176 men, in no wise equipped to go into battle, on January 5th took a farther position on Raguet's Canal. Colonel Dijean left the Piernas Canal and joined the 2nd Regiment on its left and occupied the end of the line touching on the river. A detachment of the 6th Louisiana Militia with a poorly supplied force of 110 men joined this regiment, half of the men bearing no arms at all. The breastwork begun here had been abandoned and the line of defense of 200 yards covered but a small length

of the great canal that ran two miles into the woods. With this scanty force of half-armed troops fighting almost in the open and no protection but a ditch, one can easily understand the odds against the Kentuckians and Louisianians when pitted against Thornton's fresh, well-clothed, well-armed forces. The reinforcements sent to General Morgan were, says Smith in defense of the Kentucky troops in his history of the battle of New Orleans, "Poorly armed, and had been without food and sleep for twenty-four hours. Their arms, a mongrel lot . . . old muskets and hunting pieces some without flints and others too small for the cartridges—how could men be expected to fight with a lot of miscellaneous old guns?"

Just as Morgan's troops were retiring in great disorder the Natchez Riflemen, a gallant company from the Mississippi Territory, commanded by Captain James C. Wilkins, reached the scene and with the utmost coolness crossed over and occupied the field in front of Thornton's men, where they stubbornly remained until joined by reinforcements sent by General Jackson under General Humbert. The British, however, under the instructions of General Lambert, who found that the place could not be defended without additional troops, abandoned

the position. General Jackson was greatly impressed with Captain Wilkins' bravery and initiative and the two became life-long friends.

The many dead in the enemy's ranks is proof that the forces under Morgan did not yield readily, unequipped though they were for opposing a foe. As reported by both General Jackson and Commodore Patterson, the British in the attack made on the west bank of the river lost 120 men killed and wounded, the American loss being only one man killed and five wounded, a circumstance that would indicate that Morgan's men must have been better marksmen than the British. In the attack the quick, alert and brilliant Thornton, whose name was entwined with that of Bladensburg, was wounded. None however doubted but that his troops could have held their position had victory followed the fortunes of their commander-in-chief.

Returning to the main scene of action, the Chalmette Plains became the day after the battle a great burying ground to remain evermore one of the historic spots of the world.

Under a flag of truce, sent by both sides with the strictest military ceremony a little after mid-day on January 9th, the work of burying the dead began on the left bank of the river. The cause of the delay was due to the fact that the

action on the right of the river had not yet been concluded and Jackson refused to recognize the enemy's first flag—borne by an officer, a trumpeter and a soldier, which was sent forward immediately after the battle.¹ No sooner had General Lambert ordered Colonel Gubbins, who had succeeded the wounded Thornton, to abandon his position, than the truce was recognized with the utmost military courtesy and ceremony. The conduct of the Americans upon this occasion deserves the highest praise. Jackson, stern and unrelenting in the defense of the city, exhibited a spirit toward the conquered foe well worthy of example in all warfare. A strong detachment of his troops was sent forward immediately after the armistice had been arranged to assist in burying the dead and General Kerr, Surgeon-General of the American Army, was ordered to care for the wounded. The British loss included officers of every rank. The body of Colonel Renee found with two other officers where all had been killed during the famous charge on the American redoubt drew from the English soldiery the tribute of tears.

The truth was hard to believe when it was found that upon all the bloody field, where according to Latour's estimate 3000 and later American

¹ General Jackson objected to the manner in which the proposition for the armistice was signed and required General Lambert's full name and rank before concluding the truce.

estimates 1971 of England's best soldiery killed and wounded were thickly piled, only six dead Americans could be found. The number of Jackson's wounded was also surprisingly small, said not to be more than seven on the east bank. An eyewitness in the British army was both militarist and historian enough to understand the significance of the great difference between the number lost by the two armies, and with deep humiliation remarked on the painful fact.

General Jackson after reviewing the British camp with a company of officers went to see the wounded English and assured them that they would receive every attention and care while confined to the hospital. It was hard for the haughty legionaries of Wellington even at this pitiable stage to acknowledge that grace of any kind could be expected from such creatures as Andrew Jackson and his long-haired, unshaved, and unwashed Tennesseans. Their prowess in battle however they had to concede and ever after the great Duke himself with genuine vision spoke courteously and highly of "Jackson, the American general."

The citizens of New Orleans, men and women, the latter including both mistress and maid, creole and quadroon, white and black, assisted nobly in the task of caring for the

wounded. They were tenderly conveyed by steamboat to the barracks in the city, the hospitals there being full of sick American soldiers. Later a special hospital was provided for the 400 wounded British soldiers who were attended by their own surgeons. The prisoners, also, received the kindest attention, and every possible comfort was provided for them. The fact that the two armies spoke the same language and were in the main of a kindred race was not lost on the Americans. In victory the latter bore themselves worthily. Heroism and adventure had had their hour and with every right this far boundary of the young nation took its place beside the older States in defense of American freedom.

CHAPTER XXXI

THE BRITISH LEAVE THE MISSISSIPPI

JACKSON was careful to make his victory complete, and no sooner than the dead were consigned to Mother Earth, who knows no difference among men and welcomes alike the return of all, he renewed hostilities.

Throughout the following days the American batteries continued to harass the enemy to his great discomfort. Partially destroyed, the British army made no further effort during the ten days following the battle of the 8th to attack the city.

The expedition had failed. Jackson, eager to be rid of the enemy, lost no opportunity to hasten their departure from the Mississippi. His heaviest cannon from the breastworks and water batteries were used day and night, while the mounted riflemen kept up an incessant skirmish with the British outposts. They sometimes found themselves firing at a dummy sentinel—a clever ruse of the enemy to conceal his retreat. This retreat the British conducted throughout in a prompt and somewhat clandestine manner. They made

their way through the dense canebrake and forest of Villeré's Canal as cautiously as they had advanced. Colonel Thomas Hinds, supported by Colonels La Ronde and Kemper,¹ on the night after the battle and for several successive days was sent to watch the movements of the disorganized army, the cavalry advancing at times within rifle shot of their camp near the banks of the Bienvenu and on several occasions taking prisoners.

During the final retirement of the enemy on the night of January 18th, General Jackson, notwithstanding his conference with General Lambert, still fearing some sinister design on the part of the British, ordered Colonel Hinds with his whole cavalry, General Humbert and the Latrobe engineers to again reconnoiter their position. In this expedition the cavalry lost one man and had several wounded. The gallant dragoons having given the first now gave the last life in the defense of the city.

Jackson had now placed Governor Claiborne

¹Reuben Kemper, one of three brothers, was a native of Fauquier County, Virginia. The brothers were frontiersmen of the type that made the Indian fighters and territory conquerors of America. They removed when very young to Pinckneyville in the Mississippi Territory and were the leaders in an insurrection known as the Kemper Rebellion which finally culminated in the annexation of the Biloxi and Mobile Country to the Mississippi Territory. Latour refers to his service in the defense of New Orleans as one of the most valuable nature, which adds another brilliant page to Mississippi's defense of the city.

in command on the right bank of the river to move against the enemy should he renew the attack. General Morgan also had orders to advance with a strong force to harass the enemy's retreat.

During the entire withdrawal from the Mississippi the British did not show any disposition to renew the struggle on land. At any moment the powerful force could have easily returned for another assault on the American army, but its commander-in-chief had the satisfaction of witnessing Pakenham's shattered divisions retire cautiously if not stealthily, harassed to the last moment by Thomas Hinds and his dragoons as they laboriously made their way over bayous, marsh lands and quaking prairies. The British on several occasions during their occupation of the country expressed their astonishment at the feats of Jackson's cavalry, and continued to attribute their failure in part to the fact that they could not make use of their dragoons.

Though the enemy had withdrawn their infantry from the banks of the Mississippi, they were still in possession of a powerful fleet. In a spirit of uncertainty as to what course to pursue they continued to bombard the American forts, principally Fort St. Philip at Plaquemine, seventy-five miles below the city. "From three o'clock on

the 9th," says one who witnessed it, "until the morning of the 18th, the bombardment, one of the fiercest of the campaign, continued without intermission." The amount of shells, powder, round shot and grape expended was enormous, causing fear that the enemy might still have designs on the city. Failure, however, continued to mark the last feeble efforts of the invaders, but General Jackson being aware that they still held Bayou Bienvenu and Lake Borgne continued his efforts to fortify every weak place in the defense of the country. Numerous small companies of Mississippi riflemen had gathered on orders of Governor Holmes at every vulnerable point on the coast as far down as Mobile to meet the English who, failing to pass Fort St. Philip, decided to return to their first position and invade the country at a weaker point of defense. The troops in the vicinity of New Orleans had been reinforced on January 8th, by Colonel Wilkins and Colonel David Neilson's regiments of volunteers from the Mississippi Territory. Kentucky and other States offered to send Jackson reinforcements. He was now getting his army ready to again meet the foe. But beyond a successful attack on Fort Bowyer on February 8th with the hope of commanding the entrance of Mobile Bay the British made no further effort

to invade the South, waiting at this point the outcome of the turn affairs had taken between the two nations.¹ Their Southern campaign covering many months and even years had ended disastrously. After inciting the Indians through Tecumseh to hostilities; after the bloody Creek War, after the attack on Fort Bowyer or Mobile point, after the attempt to occupy Pensacola, after the vain effort to capture the City of New Orleans and after a second attack on Fort Bowyer in the Mississippi Territory, the British fleet put to sea again on the 17th of March. Care for the sick and wounded left behind had been solicited by the thoughtful and capable Sir John Lambert whose retreat had been conducted with so much soldierly ability.

The news of the termination of the war between the two countries made the British eager to quit the Gulf Coast. But it was not without a keen sense of loss that they did so. Touching on this point in his narrative of the campaign, the English historian Gleig wrote:

¹ Immediately after receiving on March 13th the belated official confirmation of the ratification of the treaty of peace, General Jackson communicated with General Lambert at Fort Bowyer who soon arranged for the restoration of that post and all others in possession of the British. The capture of the Fort by the British was both a surprise and mortification to Jackson. "The fall of Fort Bowyer is truly grating to my feeling," he wrote Gen. Holmes on Feb. 1st.

“That our failure is to be lamented no one will deny since the conquest of New Orleans would have been beyond all comparison the most valuable acquisition that could be made to the British dominion throughout the whole western hemisphere. In possession of that post, we should have kept the entire southern trade of the United States in check and furnished means of commerce to our own merchants of incalculable value.”

In connection with this it may be noted that Jefferson and other prominent Americans believed that the British would have retained New Orleans had they captured it.

General Jackson had, notwithstanding the many difficulties that hedged him in, unquestionably loomed up as the greatest military leader of the war in the whole country—for he had saved the Southern Coast, New Orleans and the national honor, facts which not even his bitterest enemies will deny. On January 21st he directed an address to be read to all the corps composing the line below New Orleans in which he reviewed the campaign in a terse summary.

In announcing the victory over the British at New Orleans to Governor Holmes, Jackson in a characteristic letter written in haste from his headquarters expressed his deep appreciation of the service that the Governor had rendered in the defense of the city. This letter and all other

documentary reports and letters of Jackson, as has been observed, indicate a higher degree of scholarship than some historians have attributed to him. While not thoroughly versed in the rules of correct speech nor of writing, he was fluent in language and an original, virile style is noticeable throughout his addresses, letters and reports, many of which were at this period of his life hastily composed in moments of great excitement and anxiety. It would be far from the truth to say that he was an uneducated or an uncouth man. With all his lack of the higher forms of culture, he possessed far more native refinement than Lincoln, though the latter in later life acquired, and sincerely, we believe, a certain degree of refinement and good breeding.

The news of Jackson's victory, celebrated in the City of New Orleans with the gladdest acclaim both in church and public building, was carried across the country to President Madison by the Mississippi Creek War hero, Sam Dale. Out of the trenches, where he had fought at times hand to hand with the enemy, he knew the dreadful story in all its harrowing details. Jackson had grown to be very fond of him and the story of this ride was to become one of his favorite verbal reminiscences of the defense of New Orleans.

CHAPTER XXXII

AFTERMATH OF VICTORY

FROM the city of Natchez and the little capital of Washington in the Mississippi Territory, which had become posts for the care of British prisoners, the news of the victory spread throughout the Territory and the people who had suffered the brunt of the war for much of the time since the fierce Creek uprising spent the days in various forms of rejoicing. Joy also reigned in the hearts of the patriotic Louisiana Creoles, who bore the British as deep, if not deeper, hatred than the Americans as a whole felt for the people of what had once been the cherished Mother country. That the victory in which they so gloriously shared left the inhabitants of Louisiana and the entire Lower South as a mass truer patriots than when Jackson found them cannot be disputed. While it cannot be ignored that a small element of Louisiana's population but for Jackson's strict espionage would have remained at least neutral, the soldiery, once enlisted, whether of Spanish, French or English descent, evinced a courage and

patriotism that compare favorably with that of any troops in the field. If Jackson suspected their loyalty during the early days of his arrival in the city, all such thoughts were dispelled, once he had sounded the hearts of the people. New bonds too between the French and Americans of the city were fashioned out of the fiery ordeal through which they had passed.

At General Jackson's request the Reverend Abbé Dubourg, apostolic prefect of Louisiana, appointed January 23rd as a day of prayer and thanksgiving for, as the emotional Jackson so often averred in varied phrasing, the interposition of Divine Providence in granting the blessing of victory to the American arms. The following vivid account of the impressive event is given from Latour, who participated in the interesting ceremonies: ¹

"Every preparation was made to make the festival worthy of the occasion. The temporary triumphal arch was erected in the middle of the grand square, opposite the principal entrance of the cathedral. The different uniformed companies of Plauché's battalion lined both sides of the way, from the entrance of the square towards

¹Latour is not generally read at present and in justice to Jackson the spirit prevailing among the people of that time should be presented from original sources. Both Walker and King give interesting accounts of the celebrations in the city that followed the American victory.

the river, to the church. The balconies and windows of the city hall, the parsonage house, and all the adjacent buildings were filled with spectators. The whole square, and the streets leading to it, were thronged with people. The triumphal arch was supported by six columns. Amongst those on the right was a young lady representing Justice and on the left another representing Liberty. Under the arch were two young children, each on a pedestal, holding a crown of laurel. From the arch in the middle of the square to the church, at proper intervals were arranged young ladies, representing the different States and Territories composing the American Union, all dressed in white covered with transparent veils, and wearing a silver star on their foreheads. Each of these young ladies held in her right hand a flag inscribed with the name of the State she represented, and in her left a basket trimmed with blue ribands, and full of flowers. Behind each was a shield suspended on a lance stuck in the ground inscribed with the name of the State or Territory. The intervals had been so calculated, that the shields, linked together with verdant festoons, occupied the distance from the triumphal arch to the church.

“General Jackson, accompanied by the officers of his staff, arrived at the entrance of the square, where he was requested to proceed to the church by the walk prepared for him. As he passed under the arch, he received the crowns of laurel from the two children, and was congratulated in

an address spoken by Miss Kerr who represented the State of Louisiana. The General then proceeded to the church amidst the salutations of the young ladies representing the different States, who strewed the passage with flowers. At the entrance of the church he was received by the Abbé Dubourg, who addressed him in a speech suitable to the occasion, and conducted him to a seat prepared for him near the altar. Te Deum was chaunted with impressive solemnity, and soon after a guard of honor attended the General to his quarters, and in the evening the town, with its suburbs, was splendidly illuminated."

The address of the Reverend Abbé Dubourg and the reply of General Jackson delivered during the impressive thanksgiving ceremonies conducted in the old St. Louis Cathedral are given in full since they better than the historians interpret the occasion and the prevailing sentiments.

On the arrival of General Jackson in the cathedral accompanied by his staff and all officers, the Abbé Dubourg made the following address:

"General, whilst the State of Louisiana in the joyful transports of her gratitude, hails you as her deliverer; and the asserter of her menaced liberties, whilst grateful America so lately wrapped up in anxious suspense on the fate of this important city, the emporium of the wealth of one half of her territory and the true bulwark

of its independence, is now re-echoing from shore to shore your splendid achievements, and preparing to inscribe your name on her immortal rolls, among those of her Washingtons—whilst history, poetry, and the monumental arts will vie in consigning to the admiration of the latest posterity, a triumph perhaps unparalleled in their records—whilst thus raised by universal acclamation to the very pinnacle of fame and ascending clouds of incense, how easy it had been for you, General, to forget the prime mover of your wonderful successes, to assume to yourself a praise which must essentially return to that exalted source whence every sort of merit is derived. But better acquainted with the nature of true glory, and justly placing the summit of your ambition in approving yourself the worthy instrument of Heaven's merciful designs, the first impulse of your religious heart was to acknowledge the signal interposition of Providence—your first step is a solemn display of your humble sense of His favors.

“Still agitated at the remembrance of those dreadful agonies from which we have been so miraculously rescued, it is our pride, also, to acknowledge that the Almighty has truly had the principal hand in our deliverance, and to follow you, General, in attributing to His infinite goodness the homage of our unfeigned gratitude. Let the infatuated votary of a blind chance deride our credulous simplicity; let the cold-hearted atheist look up for the explanation of such important

events to the mere concatenation of human causes; to us, the whole universe is loud in proclaiming a supreme Ruler who as He holds the hearts of man in his hand, holds also the thread of all contingent occurrences. 'Whatever be his intermediate agents,' says an illustrious prelate, 'still on the secret orders of His all-ruling providence depends the rise and prosperity, as well as the decline and downfall of empire. From His lofty throne above He moves every scene below, now curbing, now letting loose the passions of men, now enfusing His own wisdom into the leaders of Nations, now confounding their boasted prudence, and spreading upon their councils a spirit of intoxication, and thus executing his uncontrollable judgments on men, sons of men, according to the dictates of His own unerring justice.'

"To Him, therefore, our most fervent thanks are due for our late unexpected rescue, and it is Him we chiefly intend to praise, when considering you, General, as the man of His right hand, whom he has taken pains to fit out for the important commission of our defense; we extol the fecundity of genius, by which, in an instant of the most discouraging distress, you created unforeseen resources raised as it were, from the ground, hosts of intrepid warriors and provided every vulnerable point with ample means of defense. To Him we trace that instinctive superiority of your mind, which at once rallied around you universal confidence; impressed one

irresistible movement to all the jarring elements of which this political machine is composed, aroused their slumbering spirits, and diffused through every rank that noble ardor which glowed in your own bosom. To Him, in fine we address our acknowledgments for that consummate prudence which defeated all the combinations of a sagacious enemy, and tangled him in the very snares which he had spread before us, and succeeded in effecting his utter destruction, without once exposing the lives of our citizens. Immortal thanks be to His supreme majesty for sending us such an instrument of His bountiful designs! A gift of that value is the best token of the continuance of His protection—the most solid encouragement to us to sue for new favors. The first which it emboldens us humbly to supplicate as it is the nearer to our throbbing heart is that you may long enjoy, General, the honor of your grateful country, of which you will permit us to present you a pledge in this wreath of laurel, the prize of victory, the symbol of immortality. The next is a speedy and honorable termination of the bloody contest in which we are engaged. No one has so efficaciously laboured as you, General, for the acceleration of that blissful period; may we soon reap that sweetest fruit of your splendid and uninterrupted victories.”

To this General Jackson replied in the following Jacksonian style in formal moments, though the lines had in all probability received

the criticism of his distinguished Aide, Edward Livingston:

“Reverend Sir, I receive with gratitude and pleasure the symbolical crown which piety has prepared. I receive it in the name of the brave men who have so effectually seconded my exertions for the preservation of their country—they well deserve the laurels which their country will bestow.

“For myself, to have been instrumental in the deliverance of such a country is the greatest blessing that Heaven could confer. That it has been effected with so little loss—that so few tears should cloud the smiles of our triumph, and not a cypress leaf be interwoven in the wreath which you present, is a source of the most exquisite enjoyment.

“I thank you, reverend sir, most sincerely for the prayers which you offer up for my happiness. May those your patriotism dictates for our beloved country be first heard. And may mine for your individual prosperity as well as that of the congregation committed to your care, be favourably received—the prosperity, the wealth, the happiness of this city, will then be commensurate with the courage and other qualities of its inhabitants.”

In this mode and in some more hilarious the Americans continued to celebrate their famous victory. Mrs. Jackson, praying at home for the

safety of the American army and that of the man who was more to her than all the fame and wealth the world could offer, left Nashville and joined him at New Orleans. Here as elsewhere throughout life Jackson proved himself to be the "great lover"—too great perhaps to accept the shrewd discovery of society that what is defended too much is likely to be injured. Jackson and Mrs. Jackson were never happier than at this period. To say that the city lavished its love upon both would not be exaggeration. When Rachael Donelson Jackson years later died suddenly at her home in Tennessee, no sincerer messages of sympathy found their way to the old, broken-hearted husband than those that were sent to him by the people of New Orleans, and by no people to-day are their names held in more veneration.

General Jackson, though he had been quite high-handed in measures taken for the defense of New Orleans, reducing both man and beast, to use a Jacksonian expression, to a state of martial law, withal had been most tactful in his praise and commendation of the doubtful elements among its population. Especially was he so while the actual defense of the city was being conducted. His daily reports abound in warm praise for all troops from the State of Louisiana. Quite in contrast was this spirit with that manifested by

the State legislature towards one who has justly been termed "the saviour of the city." While the people of New Orleans and the devoted soldiery indulged in effusive praise of him, that body which had refused to coöperate with him in the defense of the country added a further proof of its disfavor by refusing to mention him in the resolution of thanks voted on February 2nd to the troops of Tennessee, Kentucky, and the Mississippi Territory and their commanders.

But there were patriots in the Legislature. Quite a number of its members, says Eaton, "sought the trenches and took part in the defense of New Orleans." The majority, however, in which were to be found men of as stubborn will as his own, could not forget that Jackson had summarily and with a brutal threat ordered the doors of the capitol closed against the august body. While priestly hands were presenting the hero a wreath of laurel and patriotic voices were singing "Hail to the Chief," this Assembly with ruffled dignity remained sullen and unresponsive.

The Louisiana legislature was influential enough to give Jackson much anxiety during the months following his victory over the British. Many things, prominently among them was a demand for the repeal of the edict proclaiming

martial law, and for the discharge of the militia, accompanied with criticism and charges of a various nature made his pathway thorny for many days after the battle of New Orleans. It is claimed and justly by historians that he lacked poise and good judgment when dealing with many questions relating to the war, but the fact of his marvelous successes, and triumphs, when the odds were so tremendously against him, is proof that he possessed genius of the rarest order. It is doubtful if Roosevelt, who seems to have possessed a physical and mental alertness not unlike Jackson's, could have done as well under the same circumstances.

Latour is non-critical of the whole situation, and seems disposed to make out a case for all parties concerned. His praise of Jackson throughout is warm and sincere and his memoir of the campaign will continue to be regarded in many respects as one of the most dependable sources of information.

The Government at Washington was deeply impressed with Jackson's military leadership, which attracted much attention there and in European Courts. The political forecasters, who are ever watchful for new recruits to their ranks having great faith in their ability in this particular sky to distinguish stars from nebulae, began

quietly but persistently pointing to the man in the saddle, a man who had become a popular hero and an idol of the Southern people who were at that period dominant in the governmental affairs of the young Republic. Jackson in future was to be numbered among its favorites. It seemed as if Fate herself had been charmed by this heroic being who triumphed over every untoward circumstance and in his desire to attain eminence in his country's history had unflinchingly withstood its every blow.

CHAPTER XXXIII

GENERAL JACKSON HONORED BY THE PEOPLE OF
MISSISSIPPI; ESTIMATE OF GOVERNOR W. C. C.
CLAIBORNE AND LEADERS FROM MISSISSIPPI
TERRITORY DURING THE SOUTHERN CAMPAIGN
AGAINST THE BRITISH

THE following proceedings of the legislature of the State of Mississippi in welcoming General Jackson years later to the State whose new capital had been named in his honor will be read with interest.¹ From Jackson's acceptance one can get a true impression of the spirit of the Territory during the War of 1812 and can understand how confidently he looked to Holmes and Mississippi in every crisis of his campaign. The printed document records the following: "Mr. Harris, from the Joint-Committee appointed to meet General Andrew Jackson, and welcome him within the borders of this State, Reported—That they had performed that duty, by delivering him an Address, in the following words, to wit:

¹ Mississippi Territory became a State in 1817. The eastern portion of her domain formed the Alabama Territory which in 1819 was also admitted to the union.

"General Andrew Jackson:

"In pursuance on a Joint-Resolution of both Houses of the General Assembly of this State, now convened, in a place bearing your name, we have the honor to address you, as their Committee; and to assure you of a cordial welcome by them within the borders of this State. This manifestation of their pleasure, is founded in the most grateful feelings for the many high and important services you have rendered your country, and particularly the State of Mississippi, which are not confined to your Military achievements, more than your civic services.

"We remember with gratitude, when the predatory and savage warfare harassed us, you were foremost to lay aside domestic ease, and brave the hardships and hazards of war incident to inclement seasons, and the deprivations of a wilderness, to protect our homes and families from savage cruelties.

"When we were engaged in a conflict with one of the most powerful Nations of Europe, and they seemed to combine their powers for the extermination of Freedom—it was you, who allayed the asperity of petty parties, and inspired our citizen-soldiers with a confidence which secured the repulsion of an invading foe from the possession and rapine of the great Emporium of our whole Western Commerce, and closed the war with a halo of Glory which surrounds our country.

"By your counsels have been obtained large

and fertile tracts of country—giving homes and comfort to many worthy citizens of this, as well as of our adjoining and sister State, Alabama. This grateful acknowledgment made by so many of your contemporary fellow-citizens, while in the full enjoyment and feeling of their benefits—how pure and extended should be the gratification to a great and virtuous patriot, arising from the reflection, that those benefits will be continued to millions yet unborn, and gratefully acknowledged when you, who have imparted them, shall be mingled with the clods of the valley, and co-extensive with the floating of their commerce on their favorite streams, Mobile, Tennessee, Pearl and Mississippi Rivers?

“In conclusion—we assure you of the continuation of our confidence and that our aspirations shall be offered at the Throne, from whence emanates all good, for your future prosperity and happiness.

“JANUARY, 20, 1828.”

To which General Jackson replied as follows:

“Gentlemen:

“I have no language to express the gratitude which the kindness of your salutation on the part of both Houses of the Legislature of Mississippi excites in my breast.—While I acknowledge that you set too high a value on, and reward with too liberal a hand, the humble services which providence enabled me to render my country, I can but admire the generosity of your motives, and

hope that it may afford a perpetual and salutary stimulus to public spirit, should future dangers make a demand on the patriotism of our fellow-citizens. When the frontiers of your infant State were pierced and agonized by savage warfare, your Governor and the Legislature I found equally prompt and zealous in the supply of men and means for their defence. When the fairest portion of the Union was invaded by a fierce and ancient foe, 'powerful in the means and habits of war,' your Governor and Legislature, exhaustless in energy and patriotism, poured out the resources of the State, and sent forth her sons to the conflict. The first gave support—the last gave renown to the nation; and their gallant leader ¹—I am proud to see him near me, sharing, as he richly merits, the gratitude and respect of his fellow-citizens. I beg you, gentlemen, to convey to the honorable bodies from which you emanate, my humble thanks for their kindness, and the assurance of my sincere respects and consideration; and I also pray you to accept for yourselves, the expressions of esteem and regard with which I salute you.

"JANUARY 20, 1828."

In connection with General Jackson's visit to the State at this period the following invitation, reproduced from the original, to a ball given in his honor by the wealthy and cultured people of

¹General Thomas Hinds, who on his return from New Orleans in the spring of 1815 had been appointed Brigadier-General of the Mississippi Territorial Militia.

Natchez will, as a bit of social life of that period, be found interesting.¹ The record is an almost square card, yellowed by time. It contains the national coat of arms beneath which appears in printed form, with the exception of the name of the invited guest which is written in longhand, the following formal invitation:

THE PLEASURE OF MISS A. CARSON'S
COMPANY IS REQUESTED AT A BALL,
TO BE GIVEN IN HONOR OF
GENERAL ANDREW JACKSON,
THIS EVENING AT THE MISSISSIPPI HOTEL.

R. H. ADAMS,	G. WINCHESTER,
H. CHOTARD,	J. A. M'PHETERS,
J. SPRAGUE,	R. L. THROCKMORTEN,
R. G. ELLIS,	J. F. BINGAMAN,
J. BELL,	J. F. H. CLAIBORNE,
R. ARCHER,	R. M. GAINES,
	MANAGERS

January 4, 1828.

It was in no unfamiliar crowd that Jackson stood at this brilliant reception in his honor. Around him were spirits that had in a large measure made possible the victory by which he had won imperishable fame—spirits that since

¹ Presented by Mrs. Walter Sillers, Sr., to the Mississippi Historical Society.

early manhood had touched his life at many points, had understood him and proved as loyal as any with whom he ever came in contact. Not far away from the city was the old plantation home of his friend Thomas Marston Green, who had also been the friend of his beloved Rachael. He was now on the eve of a great national career and the democracy of Mississippi vied with that of Tennessee in allegiance and admiration. With the same loyalty and devotion that the soldiery of the Territory had followed his standards in war, its leaders now rallied to his support when he sought preferment in peace. They held in the main, with the exception of the Whig element then struggling to hold its own, the same doctrines and faiths; had been bred in the same atmosphere and had grown to be much alike. Jackson's patriotism had fired their already pronounced nationalism with a more fervid zeal, while he had eagerly absorbed their culture and refinement, the decorums and external graces of social life seeming to set naturally upon him.

The author intends no attempt at a detailed character study of Andrew Jackson, but in connection with other purposes merely sets forth her impressions of him. In him were to be found the great virtues and qualities of George Wash-

ington, John Adams, Jefferson Davis and Robert E. Lee. Both the traditions of the Cavalier and Puritan had charmed his fancy. He possessed in a large measure, though roughly expressed, the deep, inward piety and zeal of Jefferson Davis. There is scarcely a document, speech or conversation of either that does not evince genuine dependence on Divine Providence. But with all he differed widely from any of these, for like Abraham Lincoln he had on far frontiers been shaped by primitive influences which made him distinctly an American product, the first great type so far developed.

Of the many who took part in the defense of the City of New Orleans, especially during the period of preparation, while he was still in accord with Jackson, few wielded more powerful influence than Louisiana's patriotic Governor, W. C. C. Claiborne. The second governor of the Mississippi Territory, he had served with distinguished ability and had endeared himself to its people who followed with feelings of commingled pride and affection his career later as Governor of Louisiana. Governor Claiborne's entire public service from 1801 to 1816 is contained in six volumes of documentary history which have been published by the Mississippi Historical Depart-

ment. A perusal of these volumes will clearly reveal to the reader of to-day that his service was such as to render him one of the chief influences in the early history of the Southwest and to no public official on its early roster does Mississippi point with more pride.^c Representatives of his family still help to make up the best element in the South's population.

Governor David Holmes of the Mississippi Territory, from whose original journals and letter-books many of the facts contained in this narrative are drawn, continued to serve the Territory as Governor after its admission into the Union as a State. A sketch of his life and public service may be found in the "Encyclopedia of Mississippi History," while the publication of his manuscript journals is in course of preparation by the Mississippi Historical Department.¹ That every public act was inspired by a strong desire for the welfare of the whole country and that his spirit burned with patriotic ardor are clearly shown in his every utterance and recorded thought. The confident manner in which he drew on the people of the Mississippi Territory for assistance and support in the defense of the

¹Vol. XVIII of the *Publications of the Mississippi Historical Society* contains a character sketch of Gov. Holmes by his nephew, D. H. Conrad.

country during the Southern Campaign against the British is conclusive evidence that the seed of American nationality had been widely sown in the consciousness of its people. That this national spirit flowered and bore good fruit during the second struggle for freedom will be readily seen by all who may read these chapters.

It has already been seen that General Ferdinand Leigh Claiborne, after a most heroic and arduous service in defense of the country, returned from the Creek War after his victory at Holy Ground broken in health. On his return he was confined to his bed, an invalid for many months at his home "Soldiers' Retreat" near Natchez, but his nationalism and patriotic fervor knew no abatement. On hearing of the victory at New Orleans the night following the battle, he rose from his sick bed and lit the lamps throughout his house in token of celebration. He died a short while after. His death as has been stated was the result of an incurable wound, received during the Creek War. His zeal in defense of the Territory places his name in its annals with the framers and shapers of its destiny. A brother of W. C. C. Claiborne, there was much in common between the two. Long culture and refinement had marked their families and none were better trained in the polite observances and ceremonies

of social life. In their public service one sees reflected the best ideals of the civilization of their day, while in their patriotism and ardor are to be found a devotion and knightliness as fervent and fascinating as that which warmed the breast of Richard the Lion Hearted.

It is to General Thomas Hinds that we turn for the last figure with which to close this narrative.¹ After his return from New Orleans in the spring of 1815, the General Assembly of the Territory adopted the following joint resolution, December 18, 1815:

"That the patriotism, bravery and promptitude displayed by Brigadier-General Thomas Hinds, while acting Colonel of Cavalry in the defense of New Orleans, entitle him to our warmest acknowledgements and gratitude; and that a suitable sword be provided at the expense of the Territory and presented under the direction of His Excellency the Governor to the said Brigadier-General as a testimonial of the high sense which the people of this Territory entertain of his services and of his brave companions in arms."

In transmitting the vote of thanks of the Louisiana Legislature, Governor Claiborne wrote:

¹After being placed in command of all of Jackson's cavalry, Thomas Hinds assumed the rank of Colonel, though historians give him variously the rank of Major and Colonel in their narratives. He bore in later life the title of General, having been promoted to this rank by Governor Holmes.

"It brings to my recollection the satisfaction I experienced more than twelve years ago on signing the commission which ushered your military talents into light."

Under the militia law of the State in 1818 he was continued in the highest militia office, that of Major-General, from which he resigned in December, 1819. In 1820 he was joint commissioner with Andrew Jackson to make a treaty with the Choctaws by which a large area of land was secured to the State of Mississippi after two previous failures. In his acceptance he expresses the highest confidence in General Jackson and when notified of his appointment, Jackson wrote: "There is no man I would rather be associated with than General Hinds, nor none in whom I have more confidence." The vast territory that had been acquired was named Hinds in his honor, the new capital located there receiving the name of Jackson.

In 1819 he was a candidate for governor with Daniel Burnet for lieutenant-governor, but his opponent, George Poindexter, was elected.¹ He

¹ A striking instance of the inconsistencies of political favoritisms is shown in the fact that Poindexter had made a poor reputation as a soldier in the War of 1812 while Thomas Hinds had reflected great honor on the State. But Poindexter, notwithstanding his failure to win renown in the war, was a man of marked ability, and was a prominent political figure then and for many subsequent years.

was a member of the legislature in 1823, was elected to Congress to succeed William Haile and re-elected, serving from December 8, 1828, to March 3, 1831. When Poindexter proposed to defeat the confirmation of President Jackson's nomination of William M. Gwin as United States Marshal for Mississippi in 1833, the President sent in Hinds' name for the place. Poindexter withdrew his opposition to Gwin and the name of Hinds was withdrawn. Afterwards General Hinds was proposed as a candidate for United States Senator in 1835 against Poindexter, but was induced to decline in favor of Robert J. Walker. Between Thomas Hinds and Samuel Davis of Woodville, the father of Jefferson Davis, President of the Southern Confederacy, a warm attachment existed. It was in the care of the former that young Jefferson was sent back to Kentucky, his native state, and placed in its schools where he was educated. General Hinds at that time paid a visit to General Jackson at the Hermitage and throughout life they enjoyed a close friendship, frequently serving together on commissions in the interest of the lower Mississippi valley.

Thomas Hinds died at Old Greenville, Jefferson County, August 23, 1840. During his life he was

preëminently the military hero of Mississippi. J. F. H. Claiborne described him as "one of the most intrepid men that ever lived."

Near the site of Old Greenville, in a secluded plantation graveyard, the usual type of burial ground in the ante-bellum period, General Thomas Hinds was buried beside his lovely and cultured wife, Malinda Marston Green.¹ His deeds are interwoven with the early history of the State. All historians recognize his worth as a soldier and a patriot. In command at times during the strenuous defense of New Orleans of a thousand cavalry, next to Jackson, it is not too much to say that he was the most spirited and aggressive commander in the American army during the attack on the city.

The heroic assistance that he gave General Jackson in successfully resisting the British in their attempt to invade and capture the Southern coast during the War of 1812 is a story of valor difficult to relate in all its stirring details. And not his deeds alone make illustrious the annals of Mississippi in this struggle for freedom, but each name on its military rosters of that period represents a pioneer hero whose defense of the Re-

¹This isolated spot has been recently marked by the people of Jefferson County.

public, at a time when the spirit of nationality had not become uniform nor solidified, makes a remarkable chapter in American history.

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